UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

PRODUCING THE TRANSLATORS OF TOMORROW: DESIGNING A STUDENT-CENTRED AND COMPETENCE-BASED TRANSLATION CURRICULUM FOR SAUDI UNIVERSITIES

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This work or any part thereof has not previously been presented in any form to the University or to any other body whether for the purposes of assessment, publication or for any other purpose (unless otherwise indicated). Save for any express acknowledgments, references and/or bibliographies cited in the work, I confirm that the intellectual content of the work is the result of my own efforts and of no other person.

Signature.....Sara Mohammed Almugharbil.....

Date: 11th of May 2021

Abstract

The main aim of this research project is to investigate the extent to which translation courses in Saudi Arabia adequately prepare students to take up careers as professional translators according to current market needs. Saudi Vision 2030 acknowledges that graduates must be able to operate at a professional level of competence in order to be competitive in terms of employability. Accordingly, there is a need to improve the translation skills and competences of graduates of translation courses in Saudi Arabia and, more broadly, in the Arabic-speaking world.

Using a Saudi case study, this research explores how competency-based course content can be combined with analysis of multiple stakeholders' perspectives and a review of research, policies, and best practice to identify potential gaps between undergraduate translator training approaches and the needs of the translation industry. Primary data has been collected by surveying four samples: a sample of staff teaching translation modules at Saudi Universities, a sample of students and graduates of EFL and translation at Saudi universities as well as a sample of some of the top employers in Saudi Arabia. The data gathered is intended to help the course designers and educational practitioners in developing translation skills curricula through evidence-based recommendations. By implementing them, universities can more closely align the translation components of undergraduate degree programmes with the needs of the market, thereby enhancing graduates' employability.

The results shed light on the changes that have to be made in the current provision and existing teaching practices, curricula, and student skill sets in Saudi universities. These changes could improve the course design and teaching of translation so that these universities can produce graduates with the necessary vocationally oriented profile to work in the translation sector. This research can also help to inform education policy in the HE sector in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region overall.

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List of Abbreviations

CBT	Competence-based training
EFL	English as a foreign language
EMT	European Master's in Translation
HE	Higher education
HEIS	Higher education Institutions
KASP	King Abdullah Scholarship Program
KAU	King Abdulaziz University (Jeddah)
L1	First language/principal language
L2	Second language
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
NCAAA	National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment
SL	Source language
TL	Target language
ST	Source text/Source-language text
TT	Translated text/target-language text
UN	United Nations

1 Introduction

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter establishes the research context. It begins by considering the educational setting for the study. Accordingly, it identifies the factors that influence Saudi Arabia's higher education (HE) system and the approaches adopted in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) and translation studies (TS). The choice of EFL is justified due to the consideration of translation as a cognitive learning strategy in the EFL classrooms. Also, in Saudi Arabia a single English language department controls EFL and TS courses (Elmahdi, 2016). Information is also provided about Arabic, the national language of Saudi Arabia and the principal language (L1) of all the participants in this study. The chapter then discusses Key periods of the history of translation in the Arabic-speaking world before outlining more recent developments in the translation industry and their impact on contemporary attitudes towards translation in Saudi Arabia. After stating the rationale for this study and the contribution that this research makes to the field of translation studies, the aims and objectives are presented with the questions that it aims to address. The chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis that outlines its contents.

1.2 The Research Context: Saudi Arabia

This section provides contextual information about the sociocultural backdrop for the study. It also focuses on the extent to which the content of translation courses in Saudi Arabia and the competences that students acquire in Saudi Arabia are aligned with the current needs of the translation industry in the country. Outside observers of Saudi society, particularly non-Muslim Westerners, often describe the Kingdom as a place of both change and continuity, where the ultramodern coexists with the ultraconservative. This section attempts to provide some explanation for this phenomenon and to discuss how this paradox is reflected in the HE sector. It also considers several factors that have an impact on the teaching of EFL and TS in Saudi Arabia, giving education in these two fields a distinctive profile in Saudi society.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia dominates the Arabian Peninsula (see Figure 1.1) and has a population of nearly 28 million inhabitants, 60% of whom are now young people aged less than 25 years old (Ministry of the Interior, 2017). Since the discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia in the mid-1930s, the money generated by oil exports has in turn been used to transform the nomadic society into an urban one (Rasheed, 2010). Although oil-fuelled prosperity has brought about massive changes in Saudi Arabia, the country still retains many characteristics that reflect the deeply conservative attitudes of large sectors of the population.

Saudi Arabia is an Islamic state and is considered to be the cradle of Islam. As a result, millions of Muslims from all over the world come to Saudi Arabia each year on a pilgrimage (*Hajj*) to the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah.

Figure 1.1: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Source: http://www.operationworld.org)

1.2.1 The education system

Many of the countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) were formerly colonies of European powers and have educational systems that have been influenced by Western European models, particularly French or British models. However, Saudi Arabia is an exception in the MENA region. The country retains its own distinctive foundations based on Islamic values. These foundations are reflected in the content of the curricula from the primary to tertiary levels of the education system and, as explained later (see Section 1.2.3), Islamic tradition also influences approaches to teaching and learning. Because of its interpretation of Islamic teachings and the influence of Arab sociocultural traditions, the Kingdom

strictly enforces a policy of gender segregation throughout all levels of its education system including every private and public HE institution (Al-Munajjed, 1997).[1]

The Saudi education system has come a long way since 1945, when the first attempts were made to establish a state system of elementary schools—initially for boys only—by the then-monarch, King Abdulaziz Al-Saud. The first girls' school opened in Jeddah in 1956, with others following in the 1960s, though at the time many Saudis still opposed education for women (Ministry of Education, 2019: online). For all Saudi citizens, compulsory education now lasts for 12 years, starting at the age of 6 and ending at 18, and remains free from the elementary to tertiary levels (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: The Saudi education system

STAGE	**AGES**	**QUALIFICATION**
Kindergarten	3-5	
Elementary	6-12	Elementary school certificate*
Intermediate	12-15	Intermediate school certificate*
High school	15-18	High school diploma*
Diploma	18+	Diploma
Undergraduate studies	18+	Bachelor degree (usually 4 years)
Postgraduate studies	24+	Masters or PhD

*Compulsory for all Saudi students as of 2019

In the last decade, Saudi HE has entered an unprecedented period of transformation (Al-Anqari, 2014 cited in Hamdan, 2015). The massive expansion in

[1] At the time of writing, the only exception to this gender segregation rule is King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), which opened in 2009.

the sector is being driven partly by the demographic profile of the Kingdom, which includes rapidly increasing numbers of young people. Change is also being driven by the Kingdom's continuing aim, laid out in Saudi Vision 2030 (see Section 1.2.2), to shift from an economy that is primarily dependent on oil revenues towards a diversified, knowledge-driven economy. The contextual speciality of Saudi Vision 2030 shows that this is an ambitious and an achievable blueprint expressing the country's expectations and long-term goals based on the strengths and capabilities of the country. Restructuring the Saudi education system curriculum towards improving the education quality for a better future for children is one of the important measures taken under Vision 2030 (Arabia, 2016).

The importance of building a new curriculum for the students learning English in Saudi Arabia has also been acknowledged by Dr. Tahany Al-Baiz, associate professor in EFL curriculum at University of Jeddah, in the first international conference that took place in the University of Jeddah on English language teaching. She acknowledged that student education needs and fluctuating economic conditions require the need for deeper insights in exploring academic, professional and personal skills; as the purpose of language learning today is completely different from the one existing twenty years ago (Al-Zahrani and Rajab, 2017).

Besides Vision 2030, the importance of English education in Saudi education system has been acknowledged by The Ministry of Education (MoE) through the development of a program 'Education for Career'. The program aimed at promoting

English education in different contexts like English for the academic purpose, English for career development and English for the specific purposes (Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi, 2016). Within this English education system, the Policy of English by MoE has emphasized the importance of enhancing the student proficiency in English language to acquire and transfer knowledge related to other fields such as arts and science as an effort to spread Islam and serve humanity (Elyas and Badawood, 2016).

At the same time, major improvements have emerged in the provision of university education for Saudi women. Khalid Al Ankari (2013: vi) notes that in 1970, only seven female students were enrolled in university courses in the whole of the Kingdom. However, some four decades later, that number had risen to 700,000, a figure that represents over 60% of all enrolments in Saudi HE. In addition, women now make up a quarter of all enrolments for postgraduate taught and research degrees at Saudi universities (Al Ankari, 2013: vi). As Saudi women continue to advance in education, their chances of entering the workforce and playing a more direct economic role in the nation's continuing development and prosperity have increased as well. Saudi Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia's latest and most ambitious national development plan to date, has emphasised the need to increase women's participation in the labour force; this emphasis marks a major shift in government policy.

Another new development in the HE sector has been the substantial numbers of young Saudis opting to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate studies outside the country, thanks to an initiative known as the King Abdullah Scholarship Program (KASP), established in 2005. According to Lary Smith and Abdulrahman Abouammoh (2013: 3), in 2011, 107,706 of the Saudi citizens registered as students at foreign institutions (the vast majority in English-speaking countries); 85% were being fully funded by KASP. By 2014, the number of Saudi citizens studying abroad had risen to 185,000 (Hilal et al., 2015: 256). Researchers are already considering the potential political, socio-economic, and sociocultural impact of the return of this massive cohort of young Saudis on society following their experiences elsewhere; indeed, these students are expected to become "an important source of highly qualified individuals for Saudi universities as well as the government and private sectors" (Ministry of Education, 2014 cited in Hilal et al., 2015: 258).

All of the factors outlined above represent important issues exercising an influence on the HE sector in Saudi Arabia, either directly or indirectly. However, regarding policy and strategic direction, perhaps the most significant short- and medium-term influence directly shaping what happens in universities in Saudi Arabia will undoubtedly be Saudi Vision 2030. For this reason, it merits a discussion in this chapter.

1.2.2 Saudi Vision 2030

Described by Mohammad bin Salman as "Saudi Arabia's vision for the future", this "plan for life after oil" highlights the issues that will drive strategic thinking and determine the direction of policy in the Kingdom for the next fifteen years (KPMG, 2017: 1). The document features 29 instances of the word 'education'. Most striking, though, are the repeated references in the plan emphasising the need to link the outcomes of higher education with employment:

> *. . . building an education system* ***aligned with market needs*** *. . .* (p. 13)

> *We will continue investing in education and training so that our young men and women are* ***equipped for the jobs of the future****.* (p. 36)

> *We will also redouble efforts to ensure that the outcomes of our education system are* ***in line with market needs.*** (p. 36)

> *We will close the gap between the outputs of higher education and the* ***requirements of the job market****.* (p. 40)

> *We will work closely with the private sector to ensure higher education outcomes are in line with* ***the requirements of job market.*** (p. 40)

Two further headings are used in the document to highlight the importance of this theme within Saudi Vision 2030: "LEARNING FOR WORKING" (p. 36) and "AN EDUCATION THAT CONTRIBUTES TO ECONOMIC GROWTH" (p. 40).

This discourse clearly points to the Kingdom's belief that the HE sector has the potential to act as a major driver of the transformation and diversification of the Saudi economy. However, the discourse also illuminates an issue that has been and continues to be a major source of government frustration. Namely, despite the vast sums of money that have been spent on attempts to improve Saudi Arabia's HE system, the nation's universities remain seemingly incapable of producing a home-grown effective graduate workforce that can take on jobs in the economy's key areas. As a result, employers are still reliant on workers recruited from overseas, and the rate of unemployment for Saudis remains relatively high (Bel-Air, 2014).

Since the oil industry began, large numbers of migrant workers have been drawn to Saudi Arabia who come from neighbouring countries in the region and from Asia. More recently, migrant workers from South-East Asia have added to these numbers. The Kingdom's economy is dependent on this workforce, which is estimated to number 5.6 million (Bel-Air, 2014). While many of these workers are involved in menial labour, highly qualified expatriates from Egypt, Jordan, and South-East Asia have typically found employment in the Saudi education system. As discussed later (see Section 8.5.1), an unknown number of these migrants work in the Saudi translation industry, often dealing with volumes of personal documentation that

must be translated before a foreigner can obtain a residency permit or complete any of the other procedures necessary within a highly bureaucratic society.

Commentators on the continuing failure of Saudi Arabia's HE sector to produce employable graduates often point to "the tension between traditional Saudi approaches to teaching, learning, and student assessment and the needs of the global economy" (Smith and Abouammoh, 2013: 181). The following section examines one of the key influences on teaching methodologies in the Kingdom and that influence's link to the linguistic context.

1.2.3 Islamic traditions in learning

One of the most distinctive features of the contemporary Saudi educational system is the emphasis on the Qur'anic recitation skills study (a discipline known as *ilm al-tajwid*). From an early age, long before they can even read the text, children are taught to memorise and recite passages from Islamic scriptures (Boyle, 2004). The teacher recites part of a Qur'anic verse which the children in the class imitate; this process is repeated multiple times, with the teacher correcting the children until they have committed the segment to memory (Berglund, 2010).

Although the Qur'an is now codified as a written text, as Afnan Fatani (2006) explains, Muslims believe that the content of the Qur'an originally took the form of a verbal revelation, as the angel Jibril (Gabriel) conveyed the words of Allah to the

Prophet Mohammed. Therefore, the Qur'an is considered to be "a divine miracle of language, the very speech of God which no man can rival or surpass" (Fatani, 2006: 357). This belief has fuelled heated debates over the centuries about its translatability and has also influenced approaches to translation generally in the Arabic-speaking world (see Section 1.4.1).

In order to ensure that the word of God was preserved exactly as it had been revealed, the Prophet Mohammed's followers memorised the entire Qur'an as an oral text and then recited the content to others. The tribes of the Arabian Peninsula were largely illiterate at that period but had a rich oral tradition of poetry; recitation thus came to represent the most common means of cultural transmission (Boyle, 2004). From the earliest times, then, the transmission of knowledge in the Arab Islamic world has been intrinsically connected with a reliance on memorisation and repetition. The English expression 'learning by heart' could be said to be particularly apt in the context of rote learning of Islamic scriptures since for believers, memorisation constitutes an act of religious devotion.

While memorisation and rote learning can be useful aids for retaining certain essential types of information (particularly at the early stages of language learning, for example), these methods must act as stepping-stones to the higher-level cognitive skills that are demanded for successful learning, particularly at the tertiary level. In addition to recalling facts, students need to be able to understand the relevance of information, to evaluate and analyse information, and to compare and

contrast findings with prior knowledge in order to apply what they have learned to new situations and in problem solving.

Too often in the Saudi HE system, EFL teachers still depend on the traditional techniques of repetition and memorisation reflected in the continued prevalence of the audio-lingual method and the grammar translation method. The audio-lingual method places particular emphasis on the use of stimulus and response, but in the Saudi context, it is often reduced to tutors relying on drilling grammatical rules and requiring the repetition ad nauseam of words and phrases (Al-Mohanna, 2010). Tutors who employ the grammar translation method usually start with exhaustive and often exhausting explanations of English grammatical structures. Students are then expected to commit these grammatical rules and their exceptions to memory together with lengthy English/Arabic vocabulary lists. Students' learning is finally assessed by asking the students to translate specially constructed sentences or texts from Arabic into English word for word.

It is not difficult to see how both these methods link to students' experience of Qur'anic recitation skills. However, neither method is of any real use in terms of helping students to develop the specific competences needed by a professional translator or even the generic skills that would make a graduate of languages employable in the modern workplace.

1.3 The Linguistic Context

Saudi Arabia's national language is Arabic, a world language that serves as the mother tongue of over 200 million speakers (Ethnologue, 2019). Arabic is linked to a rich cultural and literary heritage. It is the official or co-official state language of many of the countries throughout the MENA region and Saharan Africa, and varieties of Arabic differ considerably from one country to another (Veerstegh, 2014). [2] Arabic is also one of the six official languages currently used within the United Nations and its sister organisations. It is described as a diglossic language, a term that was first introduced by the sociolinguist Charles Ferguson in 1959 (Veerstegh, 2014). Diglossia means essentially that there are two distinct varieties of a language, each of which is usually employed in specific situations. Importantly, one of the two forms is considered to have a higher sociocultural prestige than the other.

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the formal written variant of the language which is introduced to Arabic speakers when they start their schooling. MSA is employed for most written and formal spoken purposes, and it is used in the media; in academic discourse in books, articles, and lectures; and in the literature of the Arabic-speaking world. This form of Arabic is not employed for everyday conversation (Veerstegh, 2014). Saudi translators working with Arabic must master MSA and be

[2] All of the following have Arabic as an official or co-official language: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the Palestinian territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen (Ethnologue, 2019).

able to distinguish its grammatical forms and vocabulary from the vernacular form of Arabic used for day-to-day spoken communication. All Saudi students must take Arabic module in the foundation year at university. Comments from the student respondents in the present study (see Chapter 6) suggest that MSA represents a challenge for some EFL/TS learners when they translate between Arabic and English.

1.4 The Translation Context

Richard Jacquemond (2009: 15) claims that "In the Arab world, translation is associated with cultural openness, social advancement and political strength" since translation has played a crucial role in many key periods of Arab history. However, it is argued later that translation politicisation, particularly in the twentieth century, has created some negative associations. Several historical eras are briefly examined here because their events continue to influence how translators and translation role is viewed in the contemporary Arab world. This historical and sociocultural context may impact on the attitudes of teachers, students and graduates towards translation in the Saudi context; accordingly, the context needs to be considered when attempting to make changes to existing pedagogical approaches to curriculum content and assessment.

1.4.1 The coming of Islam

The advent of Islam was of paramount importance for the spread of Arabic language. All Muslims are aware of the role accredited to the linguist Zayd Ibn Thabit, who acted as scribe, translator, and interpreter for the Prophet Mohammed. Evidence suggests that in addition to writing Arabic, he also knew Aramaic/Syriac script and Hebrew (Lecker, 1997: 259). However, acquainting non-Arabs with the message of the Qur'an raised the issue of translation, which in turn triggered a long-lasting theological debate. At the heart of this debate was the doctrine of the inimitability of the Qur'an, coupled with a belief that "an accurate rendering was thought to be impossible because it was believed that non-Arabic languages did not have at their disposal such extensive possibilities for the use of figurative language"(Leemhuis, 2006: 155). This debate has not prevented the publication of numerous translations of the Qur'an, but the issue of the inimitability and untranslatability of the Qur'an has been and continues to be an important topic for debate in translation studies (Baker, 1997; Mustapha, 2001; Abdul-Raof, 2001; Ben Chakroun, 2002).

1.4.2 The classical Translation Movement

The second key historical period –Translation Movement – led to the emergence of a "new scholarly culture" (UNDP, 2003: 43) and to the birth of Arab science. During the Abbasid era, Caliph Al-Mamoon (813–833 CE) established *Bayt al-Hikma* (the House of Wisdom) in Baghdad which became an intellectual centre where

translators worked on Indian, Greek, and Persian texts dealing with the sciences, philosophy, and literature (Al-Kasimi, 2006).

Early evidence of reflection on translation practice in the Arab world can be found in the work of scholars from that period. Al-Jahiz noted in *Kitāb al-Bayan wa al-Tabyin* (*The Book of Eloquence and Demonstration*), that the translator "should know the structure of the speech, habits of the people and their ways of understanding each other" (Zakhir, 2008: online). In addition to his insistence on the necessity for knowledge of the structure of the language, the culture of the people who used it and the importance of revising translation (Zakhir 2008: online).

Mona Baker (1997: 320-321) also notes that it is possible to distinguish between two schools in early Arab translation methods for dealing with Greek texts. The first school adopted a literal translation technique in which each word from the source text was translated into its equivalent Arabic word. Only those words lacking an equivalent were transliterated. Unsurprisingly, this method, used by Yuhanna ibn al-Batriq and Ibn Naima al-Himsi, often proved unsuccessful. Many of these original translations were later revised by Hunayn Ibn Ishaq and Al-Jawahiri, who favoured sense-for-sense translation, which preserved the meaning of the original and created readable target texts.

As a result of translators' efforts, by the tenth century many key writings from the Classical Greek world had been rendered into Arabic. This knowledge was then

spread throughout the Islamic world and beyond. The word-for-word versus sense-for-sense debate still underpins the methods adopted for the teaching of translation in many parts of the Arab world.

1.4.3 *Al-nahda* (The Arab cultural renaissance)

The third key period of Arab history in which translators played a major role occurred in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, when a cultural renaissance emerged in Egypt, known as *al Nahda,* later influenced Lebanon and Syria and other countries in the region. The French-educated Egyptian Rifa'a el-Tahtawy (1801–1873) founded the School of Languages (*Madrasat al-alsun*) in Cairo in 1835, where he trained the first generation of Egyptian translators; They went on to translate into Arabic dozens of books which dealt with history and geography as well as with the pure and applied sciences. Jacquemond (2008: 109) observes that this wave of translation "contributed to the modernisation of the Arabic language in both lexicon and style. It sparked creativity among Arab scholars, intellectuals and writers and led to a transfer of knowledge that was considered universal". Arabic translation was thus linked with openness to other cultures and modernisation, strengthening an association that in later years, for some, would link translation inextricably with Westernisation.

1.4.4. Arabisation

For the new Arab states, translation influenced the linguistic and cultural policy of Arabisation, which involved establishing education in Arabic and increasing the usage of Arabic in countries which had formerly been colonised by European nations.[3] As with *Al-Nahda* previously, an Egyptian translator played a central role in the Arabisation process. In 1955, Taha Husayn (1889–1973) launched the project *Alf Kitab* (One Thousand Books), which aimed "to translate into Arabic masterpieces of world literature and thought, to make the most recent scientific developments available to the Arab readership and to contribute to the modernisation of the Arabic language" (Jacquemond, 2008: 122).

The Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)[4] first raised the need to adopt a plan to co-ordinate efforts in translation into Arabic across the Arab world in 1973 at its Kuwait conference. Discussion at the conference highlighted the increasing need for translation schools and translator training that could teach Arabs how to bring texts of different languages into Arabic (Hasan 1985: 48). As a result, a limited number of translation programmes were started in several Arab countries including Egypt, Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco. In 1980, ALECSO's Arab Centre for Arabization, Translation,

[3] The use of the term *Arabisation* in this historical context should not be confused with its more specific contemporary usage as a form of translation practice which involves more than just translation and implies localising of foreign source texts or terminology, namely interpreting them and reshaping them to match the mind-set of an Arabic-speaking target audience (Al-Juboory, 2010).

[4] ALECSO is based in Tunis and works to coordinate cultural and educational activities in the Arab world (ALECSO: online).

Authorship, and Publication began planning for a pan-Arab centre for translators which would train translators and produce translations. After gathering data relating to the situation of translation in the Arabic-speaking countries, including numbers of translators and translation institutions,[5] ALECSO drew up a National Translation Plan (1985). Ironically, the Arab League's own Translation Unit was closed that same year, and the proposed plan was shelved for nearly a decade. ALECSO was finally asked to update the Plan in 1994, at the meeting of Arab Ministers of Culture held in Beirut. Although the revised Plan was produced in 1996, it has never been implemented (Meiering, 2004).

1.4.5 Arabic translation in the 21st century: The translation drought?

In 2003 the *Third Arab Human Development Report* (*AHDR*), commented on the translation in the Arab world that they did not learn from the past lessons. Statistics illustrated that Arab societies are lagging behind Europe in what the *AHDR* refers to as "the international economy of knowledge" (UNDP 2003: 2). The accuracy of these statistics has been questioned by various sources (including Meiering, 2004; Jacquemond, 2009),[6] but the numbers nonetheless did serve to encourage Arab countries and organisations to establish translation initiatives in the early part of the twenty-first century. For example, the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage

[5] The results for Saudi Arabia were published in 1987 (Meiering, 2004: 8).

[6] On the basis of his research, Jacquemond (2009) estimated that some 2000 translated works per year had been published in the Arab world in the period 1999–2009 as opposed to the 330 cited by *AHDR*.

launched in 2007 an initiative named *Kalima* (word) aimed at funding the translation, publication, and distribution of foreign language books. Kalima's website (2015) states that it was "created to address the translation drought in the Arab world". It also quotes from the *AHDR* to note that "for every one million Arabs only one book is translated into Arabic each year" (Kalima, 2015).

Since publishing is one of the key areas which drives the need for translation (Fatani 2008), analyses of the book market is a useful means of assessing the areas which are potentially of interest for inclusion on translation course syllabi. Traditionally, the greatest centres of publishing in the Arab world have been Egypt and the countries of the Levant since historically they were the first to own printing presses (Jacquemond, 2008). However, publishing activity has been increasing in Saudi Arabia and, as a result of demand from readers dissatisfied with the insufficient number of works in Arabic, greater numbers of foreign publications are being translated.

As noted above, both Gregor Meiering (2004) and Richard Jacquemond (2009) have questioned the accuracy of the figures for translation in the Arab world. Najib Harabi's (2008) report on the performance of the Arabic book translation industry in five Arab countries (including Saudi Arabia) suggests that researchers may be right to be somewhat sceptical; for example, Harabi's research highlights some of the considerable difficulties involved in gathering relevant data about books translated into Arabic. Ghalib Al-Khatib (2008), who wrote the chapter of *AHDR* that focused

on the Arabic translation industry in Saudi Arabia, identified the range of challenges that he had faced when attempting to obtain up-to-date, relevant, and accurate information about the publishing sector in the Kingdom.

Firstly, the fact that books are often published without the publisher's name, or even the date and place of publication, results in a lack of standard bibliographical data. No standard method of classification according to subject has been adopted by publishers in Saudi Arabia either. As a result, obtaining accurate and authorised data that is in the public domain about books translated into Arabic available in Saudi Arabia is impossible (Al-Khatib, 2008: 108).

Secondly, Saudi Arabia has not any central government or professional body that is responsible for the organisation, coordination, and advancement of translation activities.[7] Thus translation is not subject to any government or industry standards (Al-Khatib, 2008: 108-110). Al-Khatib (2008) notes that some private publishers have developed their own guidelines, including two of the largest publishers in the

[7] This situation differs from the situation elsewhere regarding professional translation associations. The American Translators Association (ATA), established in 1959 (https://www.atanet.org), and the UK-based Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI), founded in 1986 (www.iti.org.uk), are both involved in the examination and accreditation of translators and also in data collection and lobbying on behalf of their respective national industries.

Saudi market: Obeikan[8] and Jarir Bookstore.[9] However, much of the Arabic translation activity in Saudi Arabia is carried out on an ad hoc basis by freelancers. Furthermore, when Al-Khatib attempted to survey private publishing companies for the purposes of the study, none of them wished to divulge any information relating to financial matters (including costs and profits), sales and exports, the nature and size of the workforce, business projects, or strategies, citing concerns about competition in the market (Al-Khatib, 2008: 108).

Al-Khatib (2008: 129) makes an observation which is of major interest to this study:

> The Saudi industry in general, and the Arabic translation industry in particular, are dominated by the foreign labour force. The Saudization policy adopted by the government to replace the foreign labour force by a national labour force has not achieved a notable success in the industry.

[8] Obeikan Publishing (http://obeikanpublishing.com) was established in Saudi Arabia in 1995 and originally offered only translations of English-language titles. Since 2007, it has expanded the scope of its publishing to include translations from other languages, describing this expansion as "an important factor in the revolution of contemporary knowledge" (http://obeikanpublishing.com). The company states on its website that "we strive to build bridges between the Arab world and the West" (http://obeikanpublishing.com), a phrase which is often repeated in the context of translation activity. Meiering's (2004) analysis of Obeikan's translated publications by category suggested that books about Business Administration and Marketing represented the main body of translated material.

[9] Jarir Bookstore (www.jarir.com), a Saudi chain of superstores, originally specialised in computer and office supplies. It now has branches not only in 14 Saudi cities but also in the neighbouring Gulf States of Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE. In 2003 it added translation of books originally written in English to its publishing activities. Almost 50% of these translated publications focused on issues related to self-improvement (Meiring, 2004).

1.5 Rationale and significance of this study

As a former student of EFL and translation at KAU, I am aware that although the Saudi Ministry of Education spends large sums on educational provision, many of the undergraduates failed to reach the level of proficiency required to use English successfully in their future career, even though they had studied the language at schools since secondary level, and in some cases even longer.

Numerous studies have focused on improving the outcome of EFL/TS courses in Saudi Arabia by identifying concerns and proposing solutions to eliminate specific problems in this area. However, when I began this research, very little had been published specifically on the issue of how translation is taught to undergraduates in Saudi Arabia, and no research had attempted to investigate the extent to which the teaching of this linguistic skill adequately prepares students to take up careers as professional translators on the basis of current market needs.

While this study was being conducted, I came across work by other Saudi postgraduate researchers who, like myself, were also starting to explore how translator training could be improved. Some have chosen to focus on pedagogical theories and the way translation is taught such as Ahmad Alfaifi (2000); others have been more interested in the psychology of how students themselves learn such as Ahmad Altuhaini (2016). Still, very few studies have grasped the vital importance of not only comparing programme content and translation industry needs but also attempting to look at this issue from multiple stakeholder perspectives, including

staff and students, graduates as well as the employers of the EFL programmes graduates.

Basing an analysis solely on course documentation tells the researcher only what is meant to be taught; it does not reveal the extent to which this documentation matches the classroom reality of what is actually taught, how it is taught, and what individual students think they themselves have learned from being taught. Critically analysing and then synthesising these multiple perspectives with insights from research and best practice in the field can generate recommendations to help course designers ensure that the translation components of undergraduate degree programmes are aligned more closely with the needs of the market. This multifaceted approach helps to guarantee that these recommendations are evidence-based and fit for purpose.

Nationally based case studies like the present study add to the sum of knowledge in translation studies and translator training, two relatively recent areas of academic study in the Gulf States. In addition, this study can also help to inform education policy in the HE sector in Saudi Arabia and the MENA region, where there is a need to improve capacity in translation skills and to equip graduates with competences that will increase their chances of employability. Saudi Vision 2030 makes it clear that the priorities of the academic programmes being offered by Saudi universities need to be more closely aligned with the realities of the job market. Accordingly, current provision needs to be rethought to produce graduates with the necessary

skill base to ensure that they are employable. This need gives this research an added relevance and urgency in the Saudi context. However, the recommendations in this study will also be of direct relevance to course planners and educational practitioners who are responsible for developing curricula for translation skills in other national settings.

1.6 Research Aim and Objectives

Using KAU as a Saudi case study, this research aims to explore how competency-based analysis of course content can be combined with analysis of multiple stakeholder perspectives and a review of research, policies, and practice to identify potential gap between undergraduate translator training approaches and the needs of the translation industry. The findings are then used to produce evidence-based recommendations intended to help course designers more closely align the translation components of undergraduate degree programmes with the needs of the market, enhancing graduates' employability.

Accordingly, the research objectives are as follows:

1. To review work on competence-based models of translator training course design and identify a suitable theoretical framework for use in the Saudi context.
2. To establish the current market needs of the Saudi translation industry.

3. To analyse stakeholder perspectives (staff, students, graduates and employers) on the current provision of translator training offered in a selected sample of Saudi universities.
4. To determine the extent to which the content of translation programmes at Saudi universities meets the current needs of the professional translation market in the Kingdom.
5. To consider the implications of these findings for policy and practice and thereby produce evidence-based recommendations to help course designers ensure that the translation components of undergraduate degree programmes are aligned with the needs of the market.

1.7 Research Questions

The following research questions were derived from these objectives:

1. To what extent do the translation programmes at KAU and other Saudi universities teaching translation meet the current needs of the professional market in Saudi Arabia?
2. To what extent do these programmes provide their bachelor degree graduates with the vocational skills required for the translating profession?
3. What useful insights about best practice and innovative approaches in undergraduate translation programmes can be gained from reviewing academic literature and surveying course documentation in this field?

4. What changes need to be made to existing teaching practices, curricula, and student skill sets in order to improve the course design and teaching of translation in Saudi universities and thereby produce graduates with the necessary vocationally oriented profile?

1.8 Overview of the Thesis

Chapter 1 establishes the context for this research by providing contextual information about the national setting in which the study was conducted, about the factors which influence the HE system in Saudi Arabia, and about the approaches to teaching and learning EFL/TS. Information is also provided about Arabic, the national language of Saudi Arabia, and the principal language (L1) of all the participants in this study. The chapter also outlines key historical developments in translation as an intellectual activity and industry. After commenting on the significance of the contribution that this work makes to the translation studies field, the aims and objectives of this research are presented together with the questions that it aims to address.

Chapter 2 examines the existing research and theories on translator training and contextualises translator training within translation studies. It begins with an overview of translation studies as a discipline and then focuses on translator training. After identifying some of the key approaches within the area of translator training pedagogy and curriculum development, the chapter then evaluate the topic

of translator competence and some of the models and frameworks. It concludes by reviewing studies that have focused specifically on Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 3 establishes the research framework for the thesis. It provides a description of, and rationale for, the design of the Saudi-based study which forms the focal point of this research. The introductory section outlines the development of research methods in translation studies in order to situate this study within this field. The research questions are presented again. After the discussion of the research paradigm and approach that have informed this thesis, the research design for the study and the data collection methods and tools are described in detail. It is followed by the procedures used to assess the validity, reliability, credibility, and dependability of the results. Finally, the ethical issues raised by the study are addressed.

Chapter 4 reviews some of the models and frameworks that have been developed for assisting with curriculum development, comparing and contrasting the approaches these models have taken. The models reviewed include Dorothy Kelly's (2005) analysis of translator competence, the European Master's in Translation (EMT) model, and Anca Greere and Cristina Tătaru's (2008). Kelly's (2005) framework is used to analyse a sample of Saudi undergraduate EFL/TS courses so that the results of this analysis can be compared with those obtained by Mohammed Al-Batineh and Loubna Bilali (2017).

Chapter 5 is the first of the two primary data analysis chapters. It presents the results of the questionnaire used to survey the opinions of a sample of staff teaching EFL/TS at Saudi universities.

Chapter 6 presents the results of the questionnaire used to survey the opinions of a sample of students studying EFL/TS at Saudi universities.

Chapter 7 presents the results of the graduate questionnaire who had completed EFL/TS course and the results of the employer interviews.

Chapter 8 compares and discusses the results from the staff, student, graduate questionnaires and employer interviews.

Chapter 9 summarises the findings by responding to the research questions; followed by recommendations concerning changes that need to be made to existing teaching practices, curricula, and student skill sets. The chapter also reflects briefly on recent changes that have taken place in Saudi Arabia and assesses the potential impact of these changes on the HE sector. The focus then shifts to the limitations of the study and future directions for research.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter examines existing research and theories on translator training and contextualises it within the broader backdrop of translation studies, which emerged as an academic field in the mid-twentieth century. It begins by providing an overview of the evolution of translation studies as a discipline and then focuses on the more specific field of translator training. After identifying key approaches within the area of translator training pedagogy and curriculum development, the chapter considers translator competence. It concludes by reviewing studies that have focused specifically on Saudi Arabia, the context of this research.

2.2 From Translation to Translation Studies

2.2.1 Pre-1960s

Throughout history, translation has played a key role in human communication, and translation techniques have improved in response to the world's growing needs. In both the West and Arab worlds, for example, translation has played a crucial role in the spread of key religious and cultural texts. However, the emergence of translation studies as an academic discipline is relatively recent; scholars only began to pay attention to translation in an academic context in the second half of the twentieth century (Munday, 2008). Translation has traditionally played a secondary role in academia. It was traditionally thought of as a language-teaching activity (Cook, 2010, cited in Munday 2008); as a technique for testing reading

comprehension and performance skills in the foreign language; and as a tool for evaluating specific technical skills in the foreign language, such as dictionary use (Nord and Sparrow, 1991: 162-5). The grammar-translation method was the most commonly used approach in secondary school in many countries from the late 1700s until the 1960s, and even later in some cases (Cook, 2010). This approach, still commonly used in Saudi Arabia, is heavily dependent on students memorising the rules of the target language (TL) grammar and syntax and completing translation exercises that test their knowledge of said grammar and syntax. This approach was first used for the teaching of Classical languages, such as Ancient Greek and Latin, but was later adopted for modern foreign languages (Cook, 2010: 9-15).

As Lawrence Venuti (2012: 109) notes, during the 1940s and 1950s, translation theory was "dominated by the fundamental issue of translatability" and "whether translation can reconcile the difference that can separate languages and cultures". The end of this period saw the publication of two key works in Translation Studies. In 1958, Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet illustrated how the authors' approach could be used to analyse French–English translations. According to Venuti, this work on comparative stylistics served as the "theoretical basis for a variety of translation methods currently in use" and continues to be referred to in translation training (Venuti, 2012: 112).

2.2.1 The 1960s to 1970s

New methods of language teaching were introduced in the 1960s, including the direct method and the communicative approach (Cook, 2010: 6-9, 22-26).[10] The introduction of these approaches led to the abandonment of the previously widespread use of translation in language learning on a secondary school level (Munday, 2008). As Guy Cook (2010: 125-53) notes, for several decades thereafter, translation was used only in foreign language teaching with advanced students and undergraduates and in the training of professional translators. More recently, however, translation has come to play a key role in the language classroom.

According to Venuti (2012: 135), during the 1960s and 1970s, translation study began to be more generally seen as an academic field, a shift reflected in Eugene Albert Nida (1964) (Venuti, 2012: 138). During the 1960s, the concept of equivalence was considered to be of central importance in translation theory, which led to translation being seen as "a process of transferring the source text by establishing a relationship of identity or analogy with it" (Venuti, 2012: 135). Translation theorists at the time were interested in distinguishing between different types of equivalence. Therefore, Nida (1964) introduced the concepts of 'dynamic' and 'functional' correspondence. Categorisations by Peter Newmark (1977)

[10] The direct method was originally developed in Germany and France in the late nineteenth century. It rejected the traditional grammar-translation method of teaching and learning languages. The direct method focused instead on the use of the spoken target language in the classroom for instruction and an inductive approach to the teaching of grammar. The direct method is considered to be the first oral-based language teaching methodology to have gained widespread recognition (Richards and Schmidt, 2010). The communicative approach was also a reaction to the traditional language teaching methods that emerged in the 1970s and was more widely adopted in the 1980s. The communicative approach views communicative competence as the ultimate goal of learning a language (Richards and Schmidt, 2010).

followed, in which he distinguishes between communicative and semantic translation. Juliane House (1977) applied the terms 'covert' and 'overt' (Venuti, 2012: 136).

According to Jeremy Munday (2008), the shift from the focus on equivalence began during the 1970s, when Itamar Even-Zohar drew on Russian Formalist approaches to literary texts to develop the notion of literature as a Polysystem; that notion would later be applied more directly to the field of translation studies by Gideon Toury (1995). Venuti (2012: 138) notes that, during the 1960s and 1970s, translation theory continued to be "a heterogeneous field". In 1965, John Cunnison Catford approached translation from a linguistic perspective and is "underwritten by Hallidayan analytical concepts" (Venuti, 2012: 138). In the 1960s and early 1970s, Slovak scholars such as Popovič and Miko were working on the stylistics of literary translation. In the same period, the Czech theorist Levý adopted an eclectic approach, "synthesiz[ing] psycholinguistics, semantics, structural anthropology, literary criticism, and game theory" (Venuti, 2012: 138).[11]

2.2.3 The birth of translation studies

In 1972, James Holmes presented a paper where he proposes the formation of a separate discipline, to be known as translation studies, and maps the key

[11] As Jettmarová explains, much of the work by Czech and Slovak translation theorists remained unknown in the West due to the cultural isolation of the Soviet bloc. See Z. Jettmarová (2008) Czech and Slovak translation theories: The lesser-known tradition. *in* J. Králová and Z. Jettmarová (eds.) *Tradition versus modernity: From the classical period of the Prague school to the translation studies at the beginning of the 21st century.* Prague: Charles University, pp.15-46 Available at http://usuaris.tinet.cat/apym/publications/ETT/Jettmarova-4%2002/8.pdf.

components of this field. Munday (2008) considers Holmes' paper to be the founding statement of translation studies as a new discipline. Holmes' mapping of translation studies divides the discipline into two main areas: 'pure' and 'applied'. As Figure 2.1 illustrates, detailed attention has been afforded to developing the 'pure' aspect of the discipline, which is then subdivided into 'theoretical' and 'descriptive'.

Toury (1995), proposes a conceptual scheme that identifies and connects many of the areas in translation studies, envisaging an entire future discipline. Holmes' original mapping, as built upon by Toury, illustrates that applied translation received considerably less detailed attention, particularly in the following three main areas: translator training; translation aids; and translation criticism. The first of these terms, *translator training*, includes teaching methods, techniques, and curriculum design and forms the focus of this research.

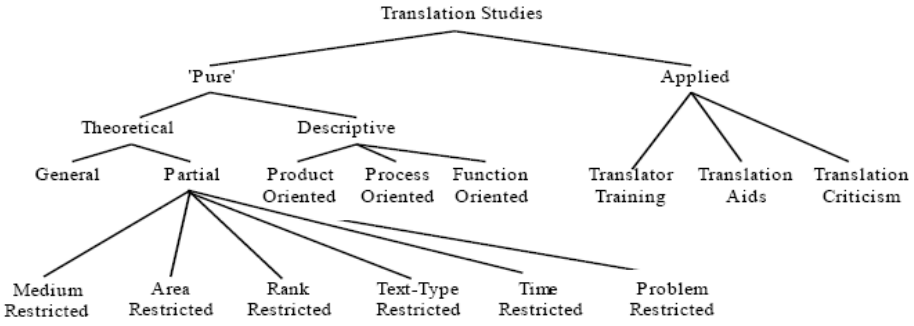


Figure 2.1: Toury's (1995) mapping of translation studies based on Holmes' ideas (1972) (reproduced in Munday 2008: 10)

Holmes was the first to offer a definition of translation studies as a discipline. His perception of translation studies concerned "the complex problems clustered round

the phenomenon of translating and translations" (Holmes, 1988: 181). According to Roberto Mayoral Asensio (2001), "the complexity and mutability of translation as a concept has been widely noted in the Translation Studies literature of recent decades". Translation theorists such as Toury (1995) and Maria Tymoczko (2005) offer flexible definitions of this phenomenon. Toury (1995: 32) defines translation simply as "that which is regarded as a translation by a certain cultural community at a certain time" (cited in Calvo, 2001). A decade later, Tymoczko (2005: 1088) defines translation as follows:

> [translation] is best considered a cluster concept with an open definition, and it is precisely this open-ended nature, together with a lack of precise boundaries, that has allowed the concept to adapt to diverse cultural conditions, social functions and evolving technologies.

These definitions are not the only ones offered on the term. However, they effectively illustrate the difficulties posed by defining a discipline when the key component that it focuses on is itself already vague.

2.2.4 The 1980s and 1990s

Two different paradigms of translation studies were introduced and developed during the late 1980s and 1990s. This period is thus considered important in the development of the discipline, with translation theory at the time being "remarkably fertile and wide-ranging, taken up in a variety of discourses, fields, and disciplines" (Venuti, 2012: 190). The 1980s began with the publication of Susan Bassnett's

Translation Studies, which became a popular textbook on translation courses as it "consolidated various strands of translation research, especially in English-speaking countries" (Venuti, 2012: 185).

Together with Bassnett, Andre Lefevere (1982) and Venuti (1995) introduced what became known as the cultural turn in translation studies. Influenced by a similar cultural turn in the study of literature, this shift in translation studies addressed the connections between culture, translation, history, and other areas and drew on theoretical concepts from gender studies and post-colonialism (Marinetti, 2010). Drawing on the concepts developed by Even-Zohar and Toury, Lefevere (1982) introduces translation as a form of 'rewriting', in which a literary work is transferred by translation from one system to another in a process influenced by a range of factors, including "patronage, poetics, and ideology" (Lefevere, cited in Venuti, 2012: 187). The three theorists were interested in examining the contexts and conditions under which translations were carried out and in the ideological frameworks in which translators operate.

According to Cristina Marinetti (2010: 29), one of Venuti's most significant contributions to translation studies was to focus not only on the relationship that translators have with culture and history, but also on forming "the basis for a more self-reflexive practice for both translators and translation scholars". The other paradigm, descriptive translation studies, as introduced by Toury (1995), was

intended to develop the empirical, descriptive discipline originally envisaged by Holmes as one of the strands of 'pure' translation studies.

Hans Josef Vermeer (1989) introduced the skopos theory to translation studies. This theory focuses on the importance of the translator's aim, or skopos, in approaching a source text. Venuti (2012: 187) links Vermeer's skopos theory and the notion of 'target orientation' (see Section 4.4).

In the 1990s, the demand for translator training programmes grew. In 1997, Brian Harris edited *Translation and Interpreting Schools*, which was the first attempt to produce a list of the translation and interpreting courses on offer throughout the world in what he referred to as a "rapidly growing field" (1997: viii). The list includes some 243 courses. Monique Caminade and Anthony Pym (1998) estimate that approximately 250 translation courses were set up worldwide in the 1990s, offering institutional training of different aims and lengths and leading to a range of qualifications. Increasingly, these courses were "fully integrated into the university system and thus linked to departments which also conduct research" (Kelly, 2005: 9).

The number of publications related to the discipline, including "training manuals, encyclopaedias, journals, conference proceedings" (Venuti, 2012: 272), continued to grow. Many of these publications reflect the impact of influential methodologies and theories from literary and cultural studies that had influenced translation

studies during the 1980s, as expressed in the work of Lefevere, Bassnett, Venuti, and Vermeer. However, attention was increasingly turning to ideas that had emerged from the field of linguistics. These ideas included pragmatics, critical discourse analysis, and the use of computerised corpora. Furthermore, "because of their usefulness in training translators" (Venuti, 2012: 272), linguistic approaches soon began to dominate the field of translation.

The final major trend of the 1990s may be described as an empirical turn that flourished after decades of debate between theoretical and purely practical approaches. Namely, the decade saw a call for "scholarly and scientific research based on empirical studies" in the form of 'think-aloud protocols'[12] (TAPs) (cf. Gile, 1994). This type of process-oriented research was interested in exploring mental functions associated with translating, particularly interpretation, which led to the emergence of interpreting studies "as a sub-discipline in its own right" (Venuti, 2012: 274).

2.2.5 Post-2000

Mary Snell-Hornby (2010: 368) argues that, since the 1990s, translation studies has experienced phenomenal growth and radical changes as a discipline due to the "globalisation turn", or the increasing influence of globalisation with the rise of information technology and new modes of communication. For Venuti (2012), the

[12] TAPS started in 1980s as an experimental method borrowed from cognitive psychology, "where it [was] used to study various problem-solving and decision-making processes" (Jääskeläinen 2000: 71). This process involved translators verbalising what was going on in their mind.

compression of space and time facilitated by information technology has revolutionised translation practices. Translation studies has become one of the most active and dynamic areas of research in the world, encompassing a mix of approaches (Munday, 2008). Venuti (2012: 391) notes that "the distinction between translator training and translation research grew more sharply defined, grounded to a large extent on disciplinary and methodological differences".

Munday (2008) notes four examples of the increasing prominence of translation studies and the improved balance in the field between practical, professional training and theoretical, abstract research. The first example is the marked expansion in specialised translating and interpreting programmes at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level; this expansion has occurred in response to an increased demand for professional translators and interpreters. Munday (2008: 11) notes four examples of the increasing prominence of translation studies in a UK context, which is indicative of trends worldwide. In 2001, "there were at least twenty postgraduate translation programmes in the UK and several designated as 'Centres for Translation Studies'". However, by 2010, more than twenty institutions offered a combined total of 143 MA programmes. Second, the number of conferences, journals, and books focusing on translation studies has increased in many languages. Third, the growing importance of translation studies as an academic discipline has been accompanied by a growing demand for teaching and research materials, such as encyclopaedias and handbooks, as well as books offering compilations of key theoretical and critical texts, edited by experts in the

area. These materials have included *The Translation Studies Reader*, edited by Venuti (2000; 2004; 2012), followed by *Critical Readings in Translation Studies* (2010), edited by Baker. Fourth, international translation organisations have prospered in countries around the globe (Munday, 2008).

In terms of theoretical frameworks, Venuti (2012: 392) argues that the sociological approaches influenced by Bourdieu's concepts of "field, habitus, and capital" represented major developments in translation research in the 2000s. In addition, works such as Pascale Casanova (2004) and Emily Apter (2013) illustrate what Venuti (2012: 393) refers to as an "increasing awareness of the cultural impact of globalization" and the role that translation plays in said globalisation. Baker's (2006) work on translation in conflictual situations is also inspired by another aspect of the globalised world, namely the central role of translation in the increasingly international nature of conflict (Baker, 2006).

2.3 Changing approaches in the pedagogy of translator training

Having considered the development of translation studies as a discipline, the focus now shifts to how pedagogical approaches towards the training of translators have changed since the 1950s. The phenomenon of institutional translation training, marked by the foundation of programmes in many different countries, began in the mid-twentieth century due to an increasing need for professional translators and interpreters. According to Kelly (2005: 8), before the 1950s, "translators were essentially either language specialists or bilinguals, self-taught in translation or with

some form of apprenticeship or mentoring alongside more experienced colleagues". House (cited in Kiraly 1995: 7) describes early approaches to translation training and how translation exercises were used in university language classes across Europe, noting that sentences were often constructed to be full of specific linguistic difficulties. This structure "means that the teachers do not set out to train students in the complex and difficult art of translation, but to ensnare them and lead them into error" (House, cited in Kiraly, 1995: 7). When students return for the next session after having prepared the exercises, the teacher "asks for alternative translation solutions, corrects the suggested version and finally presents the sentence in its final 'correct' form [...] This procedure is naturally very frustrating for the students" (House, cited in Kiraly, 1995: 7). Although this approach has largely disappeared from most British universities, the description still holds today in many contexts, as Kelly (2005) notes. Notably, this approach persists in universities in the Arab world and is particularly prevalent in Saudi universities (the staff and student respondents' comments, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, reference this issue several times).

John Kearns (2008: 184) notes the complexity of the relationship between "real world vocational demands and the classical humanist traditions of academe" as a central issue to translator training in academic settings. This tension is reflected in a long-lasting debate concerning whether translation skills can be taught or whether they are an innate gift. As Munday (2008) notes, this thinking has been reflected in academic articles since the 1970s, beginning with "Should We Teach Translators?"

(Hendrickx, 1975) and "Are Translators Born?" (Ozerov, 1979). Almost two decades later, similar questions are still posed by researchers in papers with titles such as "Can Translation be Taught?" (Franklin and Klein-Braley 1991) and "Can we Train Translators?" (Beeby-Lonsdale, 1996). These titles offer an idea of what became a long-running major debate within translator training from the 1970s onwards.

Nida (1979: 214) argues that "translators are not made, they are born". More recently, other professional translators have argued that they never received vocational training and never felt they had needed it (Weber, 1984; Gerloff, 1993; Lonsdale 1996). However, still other scholars have defended the importance of translation training as a means of enhancing students' professional skills. B. McCluskey (1987: 20), for example, emphasises the importance of professional training in translation at universities. As professional translation becomes ever more specialised and increasingly dependent on a working knowledge of ICT, the once widespread belief that translation is an art that cannot be taught has started to disappear, and the idea of translator training has started to flourish.

As Candace Seguinot (2008) notes, researchers working in translation studies began to pay closer attention to the concerns of translation as a profession due to the influence of Nida's (1969: 4) "more target-oriented explanations of translation" and Newmark (1988), which was indicative of a more practical, problem-centred approach to teaching material.

2.3.1 New directions for the millennium

The publication that most accurately reflects the range of approaches that dominated the pedagogy of translator training in the early part of the twenty-first century was the product of the 1999 forum "Training translators and interpreters: New directions for the millennium", which was hosted by the School of Translating and Interpreting at the University of Vic, Spain (Tennent, 2005). According to Christopher Scott- Tennent, the forum was intended to act as "a platform for debate, a site for examining critically different positions regarding translator/interpreter training" (Tennent, 2005: xv). Many well-known translation scholars, including Venuti, Nida, and Toury, participated. As Tennent notes, the forum highlighted the diverse theoretical perspectives and disciplines that constitute translation studies. Tennent (2005: xv-xvi) adds that the debates at the forum reflected the major divisions within translation studies at the time between linguistics and cultural studies. Tennent's (2005: xx) assessment indicates the extent to which "If nothing else, the Vic Forum set a precedent by posing questions that are still being discussed", including questions regarding the nature of translation itself.

Following the forum, an edited collection of essays on issues related to the pedagogy of both translation and interpreting at undergraduate and postgraduate level was published in 2005. As Tennent (2005: xxiv) explains, the essays were written after the forum and aimed to address some of the points that had emerged during the debates that had taken place during the forum; these debates had made

clear that "the task of training aspiring translators/interpreters requires new directions, as well as revisions of traditional notions concerning their roles".

The collection of essays begins with two overviews, one of a training programme for translators and the other of a training programme for interpreters. The overviews include both programmes' content and methodologies. In this context, it is useful to mention the contribution by Margherita Ulrych (2005), who carried out a survey of translation teaching in a cross-sectional sample of higher education institutions across the globe. The institutions included in the survey were generally recognised as leaders in the field. She admitted that her results were not intended to provide "an exhaustive picture of translation-training world-wide" (Ulrych, 2005: 29). Indeed, Ulrych's survey was Euro-centric. It did not obtain responses from institutions in Arabic-speaking countries, Asia, or Africa, and Latin America was represented by one response from Brazil. Nonetheless, the survey provides an insight into some of the tendencies in the curricula of those institutions, which, at that time, were considered to be the most successful and influential translator training providers. The findings of this survey illustrate that translator training provision takes many varied forms, with courses paying close attention to local conditions and specificities. Responses from the survey also highlight a need for training translators to be responsive to the need to change curricula as new developments emerge.

In the introduction to this edited collection, Tennent (2005) notes that there has been a shift in translation pedagogy which reflects developments in second-language teaching. The shift has involved a move "away from the traditional teacher-centred approach to a more communicative one" (Tennent, 2005: xxiii). This shift is illustrated in the essay "Pedagogical Strategies", written by Maria González Davies (2005). Davies offers specific practical suggestions that show how traditional translation pedagogies in the classroom may be replaced by a more student-centred approach. Davies' general approach is to transform the classroom into an interactive workshop where problems and solutions are freely discussed. In terms of curriculum design, Davies stresses the need to create training programmes with specific aims that include material and tasks that students would be likely to encounter as professional translators. Davies also advises that practitioners' participation in the translation industry is a useful means of identifying such materials and tasks; accordingly, she recommends adopting an approach that will cater to the different learning styles of individual students.

Richard Samson (2005) and Michael Cronin (2005) both agree with Davies' (2005) argument that there is a need for a new approach by translation trainers as a result of broader changes in the understanding of the role of teachers and learners in the process of education itself. Samson (2005) focuses on how technology will accelerate this change in the field of translation studies, pointing to the increasing emphasis within education on the needs of the individual learner and the emergence of the teacher as a facilitator of learning due to the development of

digital and mobile technology and communications (Prensky, 2001). Tennent (2005: xxiv) quotes Don Kiraly (2000) to illustrate how this new understanding has affected pedagogy and has been acknowledged explicitly or implicitly by these three contributors:

> In recent years, it has become a commonplace in educational psychology that knowledge is constructed by learners, rather than being simply transmitted to them by their teachers. The implications of this viewpoint for the educational process are revolutionary, because it shifts the traditional focus of authority, responsibility and control in the educational process away from the teacher and towards the learner.

Cronin (2005: 259) acknowledges the need to be aware of the fact that students are not "always and everywhere the same", which has important implications when dealing with translator training since one educational solution will not necessarily be right in all situations. In short, what may work well in one learning environment may be inappropriate in another. While this statement may seem somewhat obvious, it highlights the crucial fact that educational contexts can vary significantly across cultures.

Cronin (2005), consciously or not, picks up on a major paradigm shift occurring within the approach to the teaching of EFL. This shift led to discussion of the start of a post-method period (Brown, 2002). Cronin's (2005) discussion highlights that many of the methodologies developed in Western contexts were losing favour

elsewhere in the world. Robert Phillipson (1992) and Bala Kumaravadivelu (1994; 2001; 2006) link this development in EFL teaching to a wider rejection of the Western imperialistic constructs of centre (developed world) and periphery (developing world) that was making its presence known in many academic fields (including translation studies) under the broad banner of Post-Colonial Theory.

The final section of the collection contains essays that focus more closely on the nature of the role that translation theory should play in training translators. Namely, these essays examine how translation theory should be incorporated into course content and underpin both teaching and translation practice. Tennent (2005) argues that these essays convincingly support including translation theory in training courses for translators. Tennent (2005: xxii) first points out that theory has a positive impact on the quality of translation because it enables students "to evaluate their decision-making, raise the level of consciousness about their practice and about the range of choices available to them". Secondly, theory alerts trainees to the fact that "translation is a linguistic, social, and cultural practice that takes place in a particular moment in history" (Tennent 2005: xxii). As a result of this enhanced knowledge about the nature of the task that they are undertaking and this increased awareness of the importance of the role that translators play, "translators can make more responsible choices" (Tennent 2005: xxii). However, the nature and extent of the link between theory and practice have been debated in the context of translator training. Some well-known academics in this field have argued that, while theory may provide a useful and necessary underpinning for the academic discipline

of translation studies, it is of limited relevance and applicability to many professional translators (Pym, 2003).

2.4 Translator Training and Curriculum Development

Kearns (2006: 40) observes that, while a growing amount of literature has been published on translator training, the literature has still largely failed to address the issue of curriculum development and "how knowledge about the acquisition of translation skills may inform the organisation of translation pedagogy at a more general, practical level". This section outlines the key findings of studies conducted in this area that are judged to be of particular relevance to this research field. After examining the key findings of each study, any weaknesses are identified and briefly discussed.

Kelly (2005) provides an extensive overview of the key approaches to translator training, identifying major authors in the field. Jean Delisle (1980) is the first to have applied the concept of general and specific learning 'objectives' to translation training. Kelly (2005: 12) concludes that "his contribution to translator training [...] was rather to remind trainers of the need to apply basic teaching principle to their classes". According to Kelly, Delisle (1998: 21-2) identifies four advantages offered by planning to ensure that learning objectives are both clear to students and can be achieved. Planning facilitates communication between teachers and students, helps teachers in make appropriate decisions concerning teaching tools, ensures that a

range of learning activities are used in the classroom, and facilitates provision of a solid basis for the assessment of the learning that has taken place.

Christiane Nord (1988; 1991) is also an early advocate of introducing activities for students that they are likely to meet in the professional world and offers a comprehensive model that adopts a student-centred approach to teaching and learning. This model is based on the belief that translator training should help students to operate as professionals. In order for students to operate as professionals, students often need a high level of input from teachers to acquire the skills required in translator competence (Kelly, 2005).

Daniel Gile (1995) also insists on adopting a process-centred approach when training translators, identifying a number of advantages in applying the method, particularly in the early stages of training. Comparing some of the main concepts and models of translator training, Gile concludes that, with this approach, the progress is faster and provides a clearer focus on the process and translation strategies.

Cognitive and psycholinguistic approaches to training also emerged in the 1990s. Kiraly (1995: 3) called for "systematic elaboration of the issues underlying descriptive translation pedagogy, a pedagogy based on the accurate theoretical description of translation practice", emphasising what he refers to as "a think-aloud approach". Kiraly, according to Kelly (2005), offers awareness of the importance of

understanding the translator's self-concept, which Kiraly views as an essential aim of translation training that also improves training programmes. Just five years later, however, Kiraly (2000) would criticise his own work in the cognitive field and champion instead a socio-constructive collaborative approach to translator training (see Section 4.2.1).

Douglas Robinson (1997: 49) proposed that an approach should be taken to translator training that balances "slow academic learning (conscious, analytical, rational, logical and systematic)" with "fast, real world learning (holistic, subliminal)". Kelly (2005: 17) emphasises the value of Robinson's text as it "covers the professional, theoretical, personal, cognitive, semiotic, social, cultural and linguistic side of translation, forming a very complete and integrated whole for learners".

Both Amparo Hurtado Albir (1999) and Davies González (2004) apply the task-based approach to translator training, which involves using learning outcomes as the basis of planning for the design of the curriculum as a whole, an approach that develops and extends ideas originally proposed by Delisle (Kelly, 2005).

The increased interest in translator training and curriculum development in the early 2000s can be illustrated by publications on this topic by researchers and trainers working within very diverse educational contexts: Roberto Mayoral Asensio (2001), from the University of Granada, Spain; Leila Razmjou (2001), developing a new BA

programme in English Translation for Iranian universities; Moustafa Gabr (2001), interested in Arabic-speaking countries of Egypt and the Gulf States.

As Mayoral Asensio (2001) notes, traditionally theoretical approaches to translation have shaped the curriculum and material design of courses intended to train translators; this influence of theory has generally meant organising course content around text typologies and the degree of specialisation of texts. This approach has led to serious deficiencies in translator training programmes in terms of effectiveness. Mayoral Asensio points to the dangers of basing translator training solely on theoretical models of translation, noting that theory alone cannot address all of the problems that practitioners are likely to encounter. The approach also fails to take into consideration the different resources that translators may need to use in order to solve a problem. As Mayoral Asensio (2001: 82) observes, "we cannot programme the contents of a syllabus for practical translator training by copying the table of contents of a translation theory textbook, just as we cannot build a training programme based exclusively on theoretical categories". Basing a course on a translation theory textbook is often favoured at Saudi universities, including KAU.

In a rapidly evolving field such as translation studies, Mayoral Asensio argues that it is imperative to review regularly both the curricula and content of courses aimed at training professional translators; consistent re-evaluation must take place in light of factors such as the prevailing concepts of translation itself, the nature of the relationship between translation and other disciplines, technological developments,

changing markets, and the evolution of language itself, amongst other issues. Mayoral Asensio argues, therefore, that the way to ensure that the curricula and content of translator courses is fit for their purpose is to focus on course objectives, namely by aligning these objectives with professional practice and, where relevant, with theoretical approaches. Mayoral Asensio also proposes that translator training should be based on a model that focuses on problem solving.[13] This model engages students in analysing source texts and communicative situations in which the target text is to be used and acquiring strategies that allow them to seek available and appropriate solutions. As Mayoral Asensio (2001: 95) observes, "one of the problems with this proposal is that much work remains to be done in the identification and classification of an agreed set of problems, solutions and strategies".

One of the key points of relevance to the Saudi system that emerges from Mayoral Asensio's work is the importance that he puts on reviewing both curricula and course content. As discussed in Section 2.6, when the Saudi researcher Alfaifi (2000) investigated the translation programme at Al Imam University, he found that no changes had been made to the study plan for over 15 years. This model is wholly unacceptable for many reasons, and the introduction in Saudi Arabia of a quality assurance system in the HE sector is intended to ensure that this type of issue does not occur again.

[13] Asensio (2001) refers to a problem-solving model, but Problem-Based Learning is now the term usually employed for this model. See J. Stewart, W. Orbán and J. Kornelius (2010) Cooperative translation in the paradigm of problem-based learning. *Translation in Transition*, **1**, pp.1-129. Available at: www.t21n.com.

Whereas Mayoral Asensio (2001) works within the European context, Razmjou (2001) reflects on her experiences of developing a new curriculum for a programme in English translation intended to be delivered to undergraduates in universities throughout Iran. Like much of the English HE provisions in the region, Razmjou (2001) found that curricula at the time were not focused on meeting the requirements of contemporary society. Therefore, using the survey method, Razmjou began by identifying the course content and range of skills required in a translation curriculum that would train undergraduates aiming to become professional translators. This research also explored the most effective ways of developing these skills and delivering this content.

In a critique of Razmjou's (2001) approach, Kearns (2006: 106) notes that, while the initial impulse to shift the focus of the existing course "is entirely commendable" and the research efforts are "strenuous", the chances of bringing about real curricular change were weakened because the research lacked sufficiently detailed guidelines that would permit successful development of a skill-based curriculum.

A wide range of frameworks is now available to help course designers to develop a skill-based or competence-based curriculum or analyse the content of an existing course and identify potential shortcomings. These themes are discussed further in Section 2.5.

According to Gabr (2001: online), "creativity in curriculum development without a systematic approach may produce interesting class activities, but it will not engender effective teaching; the broad goals of the programme will not be achieved". Gabr therefore devises a three-phase cycle of translation programme design and development, which is intended to remedy what he views as a lack of systematisation in translation curriculum development (see Figure 2.2).

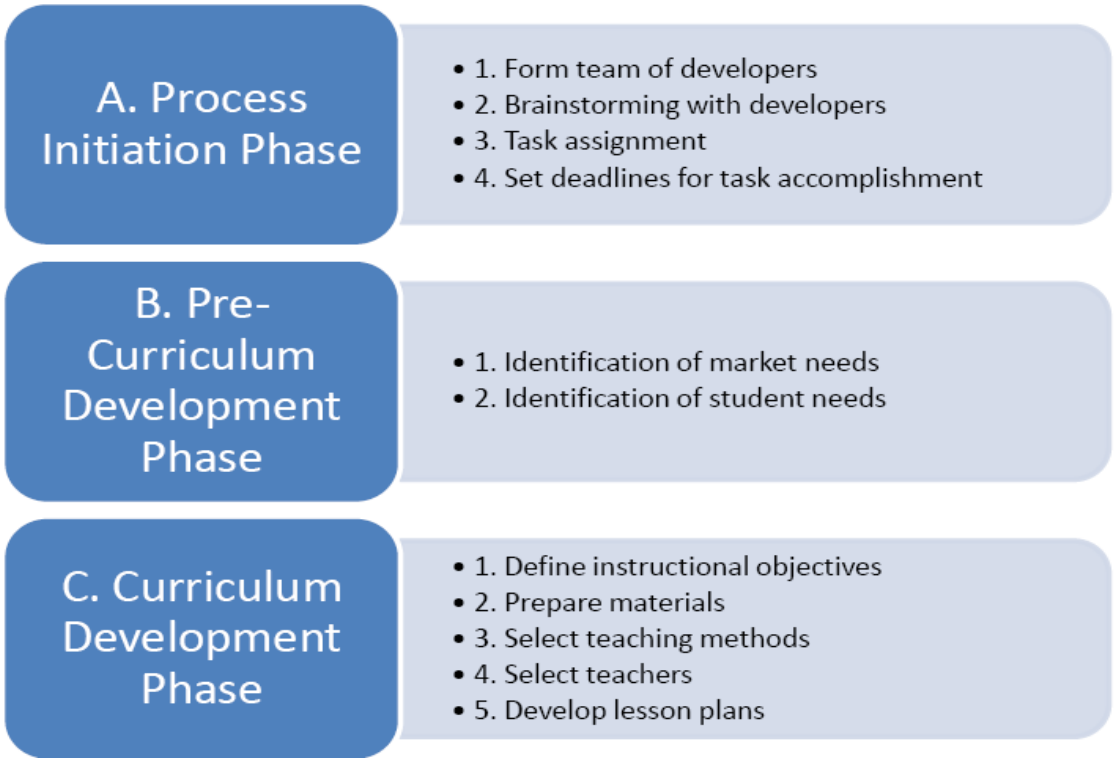


Figure 2.2: Gabr's Curriculum Development Model (Gabr 2001)

Whilst acknowledging the thoroughness of Gabr's attempt to produce a systematic model, Kearns (2006) highlights two key problematic features in Gabr's model. The first feature is that, as an idealised representation of curriculum development, the model bears little resemblance to the often far-from-smooth reality of curriculum development, which is often an iterative process of tweaking and refining elements.

The second feature that Kearns views as a more fundamental error is that the assessment of market needs should serve as a foundation for a vocationally oriented curriculum intended to train translators professionally. As Catherine Way (2008: 89) states, "the main objective of translation training is to prepare our graduates to enter the professional market".

Kearns' view of curriculum development as an iterative process also highlights the need for provisions to be well integrated within a quality assurance system that monitors and reviews the performance of provisions against agreed criteria and measurable outcomes, such as graduate employment statistics. Feedback on the effectiveness of courses also needs to be regularly obtained, analysed, and responded to. In this context, stakeholders may include staff, students, and employers of graduates, as well as representatives of other groups as deemed necessary, such as professional associations.

2.5 Translator Competence

The previous section has outlined the literature marking the key developments in translation training development as well as the recent approaches in translation training pedagogy. This section now focuses on competence and competencies which, according to Kelly (2008: 72), can be considered the main outcomes of vocationally oriented translator training programmes.

As Elisa Calvo (2011: 9) notes, traditional, rational, or theory-based, planning methods have been used when developing training programmes that include

practical contents such as competence and skills. More recently, however, the trend of competence-based training (CBT) has emerged in curriculum planning in vocationally oriented subject areas. This CBT trend has been particularly influential in designing curricula for languages and translation courses.

Jack Richards (2001: 128) emphasises the differences between the content-based focus typically adopted in the traditional approach to curriculum development and the newer competency-based model, which highlights "the ends rather than the means". He claims that the competency-based model is intended to increase accountability in the teaching process by "linking instruction to measurable outcomes and performance standards" (Richards, 2001: 128). In the CBT model, planning and learning strategies for translation course curricula and content are based on outcomes required to meet the needs of industry and employers. This model illustrates the link between competency-oriented curricula and translation training. It is noticeable here that this is first time the word 'accountability' and the terms 'measurable outcomes' and 'performance standards' have appeared together in this chapter. Richards' use of this language is evidence of a broader shift occurring within HE systems towards the "evaluation of efficiency, effectiveness, and performance […] proving that HE has achieved planned results and performance" (Kai, 2009: 39).

Calvo (2011: 16) notes that "since the 1970s, translation studies have embraced skills and competences for the mapping of translation as a complex and specialised

type of knowledge". Translation training theorists have also been discussing translation competence. Translator competence studies have approached this competence from different perspectives. Studies on translation competence began, according to Toury (1995), with the linguistic model of competence originated by Wolfram Wilss (1976). As Calvo (2011) observes, in the 1980s and 1990s, cognitive and constructivist models of competence were developed and initially influenced by concepts such as abstract mind-mapping or competence acquisition (see, for example, PACTE, 2003).[14]

Calvo (2011) notes that these concepts were followed by a more significant emphasis on strategies that involved social learning. Increasingly, "more vocationally or professionally-focused definitions describing what the professional translator does" have appeared in these approaches (Calvo, 2011: 6). Progressively more sophisticated approaches have been proposed by Robinson (1991; 1997), Gile (1995), Kiraly (1995; 2000), Albrecht Neubert (2000), and Hurtado Albir (2007). Reviews of the translation competence model literature have been conducted by Campbell (1998), Christina Schäffner (2000), Colina (2003), Pym (2003), and Kearns (2006).

[14] PACTE is the acronym for a research project on translation competence and evaluation based at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain led by Amparo Hurtado Albir. PACTE's (2003) translation competence model was the first to describe in detail how translation competence can be used in translator training and curricular design within a lifelong learning and development framework. Hurtado Albir (2007) also advocates for the use of assessment instruments such as portfolios.

Subsequently, as Hurtado Albir and Fabio Alves (2009) note, numerous attempts have been made to design curricula and programmes using various models of translation competence, such as attempts by Kelly (2005), Davies, and Christopher Scott-Tennent (2005). These authors divide translator 'macro' competence into a number of components that constitute the set of skills, knowledge, and attitudes making up translator competence. Understanding these concepts provides "a vital tool in establishing specific objectives in translation training" and helps "to develop effective modes of assessment of […] trainers' work" (Way, 2008: 91).
Way (2008) argues that CBT can provide a useful approach to future translator training research, proposing that students should be trained to find their weakest points as a means of developing their skills of self-assessment and critical awareness. Way's study of legal translation training conducted within the context of the Spanish HE system used Kelly's (2005) model, which was designed for systematic assessment of translator competence, and made significant contributions to the definition of translator competence.

Educational reforms in many countries, which are often backed by funding initiatives, have encouraged the trend towards placing increased emphasis on skill acquisition. However, it is possible to identify factors found to negatively affect determining how competence-based approaches are used when planning the design of curriculum content for translation courses. Firstly, as noted by Kearns (2006) and Calvo (2009), the decision to adopt a competence-based approach to designing and developing translator training is frequently taken without gaining a sufficient

understanding of curriculum theories or having a sound rationale for doing so. The second factor involves a more practical consideration in terms of the extent to which a particular skill model such as CBT will work within the specific curriculum setting framework.

Translator competence models and frameworks are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, which also contains an analysis of the Saudi case study that is the focus of this thesis.

2.6 Research on Translator Training in Saudi Arabia

Translation studies is still developing as an academic discipline in universities in Saudi Arabia. Currently, most translation courses are taught within English Language departments or other Modern Languages departments. However, as evidenced in reports such as that by Fatani (2008), the need for qualified translators is increasing in Saudi Arabia, where one of the key areas of translation is the flourishing publishing industry that has emerged in the region.

According to Alfaifi (2000), translation was first taught for the purpose of producing translators with a diploma from King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah in 1981; this course did not last for long, however. Following this course, another programme was established in 1984 at Al Imam University in Riyadh, and a decade later another course emerged at King Saud University in Riyadh. Alfaifi (2000: 6) notes that, in 1995, Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah established a part-time programme in translation, which took three years to complete. Since Alfaifi (2000)

conducted this study, translation in Saudi Arabia has changed significantly. There is now even greater demand from the industry and from students for specialised translation courses. Alfaifi (2000) investigated the translation programme in Al Imam University, where the plan of studies had not changed since the institution was established in 1984. Alfaifi concluded that his findings from Imam University were not applicable to other universities and departments in Saudi Arabia (Alfaifi, 2000: 10). However, despite claims that his results were not applicable to other courses, his study identifies deficiencies that still exist in Saudi translation programmes nearly two decades later. Alfaifi laid the foundation for future research in translation training in Saudi Arabia and acts as a base line in assessing areas of progress in the Saudi context.

Following Alfaifi (2000), the issue of vocationally oriented translator training has received limited attention from Saudi researchers, with the exception of Fahad Alsahli's (2012) doctoral thesis, which focused on the experiences of undergraduates studying translation studies at three Saudi universities. The aims of this comparative study were to explore student perceptions of the teaching and learning environment and determine the extent to which the design of translation studies courses influenced their learning experiences. The doctoral study focused on the role played by student self-regulation strategies in learning as one aspect of approaches to studying translation studies. Three courses in Saudi universities were examined using an adapted version of Jan Vermunt's (1996) Inventory of Learning Styles, and students were surveyed and interviewed about their approaches to

studying. Six individual student learning profiles were then analysed in depth (Alsahli, 2012). The innovative student-centred approach of the study makes it a distinctive contribution to the field.

The next major contribution to this field was in the form of another doctoral study by Altuhaini (2016), who examined the extent to which Saudi translator training programmes currently correspond to the needs of the professional translation market. At the moment, the information is available in a form of an abstract and a research paper published by Altuhaini (2015). These provide an overview of the results of his analysis from which we can glean the approach he has taken. Unfortunately, the full thesis is yet to be published in late 2019.

Altuhaini (2016) highlights the developments at national, regional, and global levels, which mean that the Saudi HE sector is facing ever-growing demands to produce translation graduates who respond to the rapidly changing needs of the job market. These demands include the Kingdom's role in international politics, growing economic competition, the desire to attract foreign direct investment, and responding to the opportunities offered by digital technology. The demands point to the need for translation courses to regularly update their curricula and teaching methodologies and rigorously monitor and evaluate standards. Furthermore, it is also necessary to be able to identify likely training needs for both the short- and long-term future. Altuhaini (2016) argues that, as Saudi translation studies

programmes have often failed to address the needs of the translation industry, these programmes should begin to collaborate closely with professional translators.

Rather than drawing solely on frameworks of translator training curriculum development, Altuhaini (2016) argues for using training principles and total quality management concepts from management studies that have been successful in human resource development and professional corporate training. This process involves considering translation students and the target market as customers whose demands should be identified and satisfied through a systematic process.

Altuhaini (2016) contends that the effectiveness and efficiency of curriculum design can be improved by employing situational analysis, analysing the environment, identifying key stakeholders, setting SMART[15] objectives, and analysing training needs and key areas of development. Altuhaini also maintains that the design process must incorporate a quality assurance-based evaluation system.

Altuhaini's (2015) initial research used semi-structured interviews to determine the level of satisfaction with existing translator training programmes at Saudi universities among stakeholders (Saudi professional translators and translation agency managers). Altuhaini asks these stakeholders to identify what they thought the current needs of the professional translation market were and provide their opinion of the components necessary to produce an effective translator training

[15] In this context, SMART is an acronym for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely.

programme. Based on the analysis of participants' responses, Altuhaini (2015: 738) concludes the following:

- There is a gap between the contents of Saudi translator training courses and current market needs.
- The translator training methodologies currently used in Saudi universities are ineffective.
- Translator trainers lacked specialist expertise and professional experience.
- Employers were not involved in curriculum planning for translator training.
- Courses contain too little practical training and too much emphasis on theory.
- Although there is an increasingly high demand for translators who can work with translation technology, courses provide very little or no training in this competence.
- Within the industry as a whole, there is a lack of regulation, certification, and auditing.

Basmah Abu-Ghararah's (2017: 107) article entitled "The gap between translator training and the translation industry in Saudi Arabia" states in its abstract that the article represents an attempt "to evaluate the translation industry in Saudi Arabia in order to identify the professional contexts for which universities should be preparing translators". The article provides a useful review of research relating to competence and translation curriculum design and provides a general overview of public and private sector organisations in Saudi Arabia that make use of translators and interpreters. However, Abu-Ghararah makes no attempt to systematically

investigate either the current curriculum content of Saudi universities or the needs of the Saudi industry. It is unclear, therefore, how Abu-Ghararah concludes that there is "a huge gap between academic training and the requirements of the Saudi translation market" (Abu-Ghararah, 2017: 107) on the basis of the evidence provided. Similarly, although she claims that her study "provides new beneficial insights for improving university translator-training programmes", she does not propose a concrete plan or provide any means of determining how these programmes might be improved other than the suggestion that "training programmes need to be constructed specifically to meet the demands of the Saudi translation market" (Abu-Ghararah, 2017: 107).

Curiously Abu-Ghararah (2017: 114) states that "programmes offered by these universities will be critically analysed in chapter six", suggesting that the contents of the article may have originally been part of a dissertation or doctoral thesis. However, it has not been possible to access this information.

It is also necessary to refer to Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017). Although this study surveyed translator training programmes across Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries, data from Saudi Arabia was included in the research, and its regional perspective makes a useful point of comparison for the current study. Based on the premise that translator training courses are expected to demonstrate that their curricula would produce graduates with necessary competences to serve the needs of the professional translation market, the researchers aimed to

determine the extent to which the priorities of these programmes and the provision that the programmes offered were aligned with local and regional market demands.

The curricula and course descriptions of the translator training programmes for the chosen sample of institutions were analysed using, as a framework, Kelly's (2005, 32-33) list of seven areas of translation competences of the most significant relevance to curriculum design, which represented a synthesis of the following key trends in literature relating to translation competence:

- Communicative and textual competence (language skills);
- Cultural and intercultural competence (extra-linguistic skills);
- Subject-area competence;
- Professional and instrumental competence (research and technology);
- Strategic competence (transfer);
- Interpersonal competence; and
- Attitudinal or psychological competence (see Section 4.3.3).

Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) then assembled a corpus of advertisements of translation posts published online by agencies in the MENA region and produced an analysis of the subject specialisms, competences, and qualifications requested in the sample of job descriptions. Kelly (2005: 25) recommends "the study of job advertisements and descriptions" as a means of assessing "what professional translators are actually required to do".

Once this analysis was completed, Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) compared the results of the two analyses. Detailed discussion of their results is provided in Chapter 4 of this thesis. Reflecting on the limitations of the study, Al-Batineh and Bilali acknowledged that one of the potential shortcomings of this approach was that not all translation posts are advertised online via professional job portals, particularly those posts related to literary and diplomatic translation. Moreover, in terms of the descriptions of courses, the authors noted that the descriptions lack a detailed syllabus, making it difficult to evaluate, for example, the extent to which certain competences are taught, or to be wholly confident that the published version of the curriculum corresponds to what is actually delivered. Nonetheless, this study provides insights into the realities of the current circumstances of translation across the Arabic-speaking MENA region.

Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) conclude that, both in terms of competences and subject specialisms, there has been a significant lack of correspondence between what was taught in both undergraduate and postgraduate translator training courses at MENA universities and what translation markets actually need across the region.

However, in February 2020, The Ministry of Culture in Saudi Arabia implemented a new initiative in the form of the Literature, Translation, and Publishing Commission. The Commission will have a great impact on bridging the gap between what is

taught and what is needed in the market, and it will support research in this field. Its main aims are to engage society through empowering and enabling sectors across the community; to develop and regulate those sectors; and to encourage individuals, institutions, and companies to produce and develop content by inviting intellectuals to discuss cultural and intellectual issues through Ministry of Culture's social media channels. According to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the Commission plans "to build bridges of communication between intellectuals and the public, enrich the local cultural scene with qualitative cultural meetings, and enhance the cultural dialogue" (SPA, 2020: online). This cultural initiative will thus have a great impact on the translation field in particular as there has not up till this point been an official body for translation in Saudi Arabia.

The Commission's roles, which are strongly related to the focus of this research, include developing educational and professional programmes, supporting and enabling talents in the field, licensing sector activities and building a database of all relevant stakeholders, implementing strategies by reviewing laws and regulations, encouraging investment, and facilitating and accelerating growth in the sector. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture has launched a cultural scholarship programme "that sets education as a basis for the development of the national competencies in cultural and artistic fields to be aligned with the labour market priorities" (MoC, 2020: online).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the evolution of translation studies since it emerged as an academic field in the mid-twentieth century in order to situate existing research and theories on translator training. As this review has illustrated, translator training and curriculum development have become increasingly important. Furthermore, research on determining translator competence not only serves a practical purpose but also provides insights into the changing understanding of the nature of translation itself. This review has also illustrated that, to date, relatively little research in this field has focused on Saudi Arabia, the context of this research.

3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research framework for the thesis. In addition, it provides a detailed description of, and rationale for, the design of the Saudi-based case study which forms the focal point of this research. The introductory section outlines the development of translation studies as a discipline in order to situate this study within this field. The research questions to be addressed are then presented. After the discussion of the research paradigm and approach that have informed this thesis, the research design for the study and the data collection methods and tools that have been used are described in detail. This description is followed by a discussion of the areas that were considered to ensure the validity and reliability of the research. Finally, the ethical issues raised by the study are addressed.

3.2 Research in Translation Studies

The field of translation studies is "interdisciplinary by nature" (Baker, 1998: 278), and methodologies originally developed in other academic disciplines have been adapted to enhance the creativity and originality of research in translation studies. Translation research originally drew upon theories and methods that were developed for use in linguistics and literary criticism, such as close textual analysis. During the 1980s, translation studies also started to borrow methods from psychology, cultural studies, philosophy, anthropology, and communication studies (Baker, 1998: 278). Following the publication of Robinson (1991), growing attention began to be paid to the human agents in the translation process (Saldanha and

O'Brien, 2013: 150), leading to the development of a more sociological, participant-oriented approach in translation studies.

In the early 2000s, new technology allowed translation studies researchers to apply innovative quantitative methods from computer science and psychology to the field. For example, methods such as keystroke logging enabled researchers to measure translators' decision-making processes, and eye tracking allowed researchers to watch how translators read and interacted with texts (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013: 1). Translation studies researchers also began to adopt theories and models originally used by sociologists and approaches employed by ethnographers and to explore the issue of research ethics (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013: 1).

The growing research interest in this field is reflected in the appearance of a number of publications aimed at students and focused on research methodologies in translation studies. In the early 2000s, Andrew Chesterman and Jenny Williams (2002) published *The Map: A Beginner's Guide to Doing Research in Translation Studies*. This book was followed in 2013 by *Research Methodologies in Translation Studies* (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013). In 2009, a special issue of the journal *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* edited by Ian Mason (2009) focused on the training of postgraduate researchers in translation studies.

Originally, the intention in this study was to draw on research methods typically employed in the social sciences, namely questionnaire surveys, interviews, and focus groups (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013). However, as explained below, due to time constraints and logistical problems, employing these methods did not prove possible at the beginning. Therefore, a second stage of data collection including questionnaire and interviews was conducted later. The next section describes the research aim for this study.

3.3 Research Aim

Before providing a detailed description of the data collection tools and methods of data analysis used in this study, it is important to reflect on the study's overall purpose and to identify what the desired outcomes of the research are. Since the findings of this thesis are intended to be of direct relevance to university teachers of translation and to the individuals who are responsible for planning programmes of study which focus on or contain elements of translation, this study falls into the category of applied research; in other words, the study intends "to make or recommend some good use of particular research results or conceptual analyses" (Williams and Chesterman, 2010: 67).

Using a Saudi case study, this thesis explores how competency-based analysis of course content can be combined with analysis of multiple stakeholder perspectives and a review of research, policies, and practice to identify potential gap between

undergraduate translator training approaches and the needs of the translation industry. This exploration is then used to produce evidence-based recommendations intended to help course designers more closely align the translation components of undergraduate degree programmes with the needs of the market, thereby enhancing the employability of graduates by providing them with the vocational skills necessary to enter the translating profession. As the literature review showed, the training of translators in Saudi Arabia and, more broadly, in the Arabic-speaking world needs to be improved in order to prepare graduates to operate at a professional level of competence. The next section focuses on the research questions that this study intends to answer.

3.4 Research Questions

The following research questions are addressed in this study:

1. To what extent do the translation programmes at KAU and other Saudi universities teaching translation meet the current needs of the professional market in Saudi Arabia?
2. To what extent do these programmes provide their bachelor degree graduates with the vocational skills needed to enter the translating profession?
3. What useful insights about best practice and innovative approaches in undergraduate translation programmes can be gained from reviewing academic literature and surveying course documentation in this field?

4. What changes need to be made to existing teaching practices, curricula, and student skill sets in order to improve the course design and teaching of translation in Saudi universities and thereby produce graduates with the necessary vocationally oriented profile?

The next section examines the research philosophy for this study, making explicit its most important assumptions.

3.5 Research Philosophy

According to John Creswell (2015: 8) "our values and beliefs shape our orientation to research" because the philosophical position which is adopted, particularly the ontology or epistemology, will impact significantly on the way in which the research is conducted and evaluated (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, before moving on to describe in detail the methods used in this study, it is useful to clarify the philosophical underpinnings or research paradigm that have shaped translation studies as a discipline in general and this research in particular. Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln (1994: 105 cited in Alsahli, 2012: 62) define a research paradigm as "the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of methods but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways". All researchers must be aware of the research paradigm within which they are operating since the ontological and epistemological dimensions of the research paradigm shape the framing of the research questions (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013: 204) and limit the research methods that can legitimately be applied to achieve the aim and objectives of a particular research study (Cousin, 2009). The ontology

underpinning a research reflects "the way the social world is seen to be and what can be assumed about the nature and reality of the social phenomena that make up the social world"; the epistemology, in comparison, refers to "the theory of knowledge and how we know things" as researchers in a particular field (Matthews and Ross, 2010: 23).

Given that this thesis is applied research, the ontological and epistemological position of realism is adopted (Mathews and Ross, 2010: 23 cited in Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013: 11). Realism implies an ontological position that is situated

> between objectivism and constructivism: it accepts that social phenomena can have a reality that is separate from the social factors involved in it but also recognizes that there is another dimension that relates to what we know about the social world as social beings. (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013: 11)

In epistemological terms, researchers operating within the realist paradigm assume that "the social phenomenon exists outside the human mind and can be objectively investigated", but at the same time they recognise "the existence of invisible but powerful structures and mechanisms that cannot be directly observable but whose effects are apparent" (Mathews and Ross, 2010: 29 cited in Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013: 12).

In this study, quantitative data were collected to obtain objective information about the courses that are being investigated and about market data. At the same time,

other contextual information and qualitative data were used to help interpret these results.

The research philosophy, which effectively governs the research approach and choice of methods, is discussed in the following section.

3.6 Research Approach

Traditionally, researchers adopted one of two principal research approaches: qualitative or quantitative. However, more recently a mixed-methods approach has emerged (Creswell, 2015). Williams and Chesterman (2010) draw clear distinctions between the nature of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Namely, qualitative research describes "the quality of something in some enlightening way" and tends to be "more subjective" (Williams and Chesterman, 2010: 64). It allows researchers to draw "conclusions about what is possible, what can happen, or what can happen at least sometimes" (Williams and Chesterman, 2010: 64). However, the qualitative approach cannot be used to provide conclusions about "what is probable, general, or universal" in relation to the phenomenon being investigated (Williams and Chesterman, 2010: 64). In contrast, quantitative research is normally thought of as being more "objective" (Williams and Chesterman, 2010: 64). Quantitative research has different aims, since it is "able to say something about the generality of a given phenomenon or feature, about how typical and widespread it is, how much of it there is; about regularities, tendencies, frequencies, distributions" (Williams and Chesterman, 2010: 64). In short, Williams and

Chesterman (2010: 64) conclude that quantitative research seeks to make "claims about universality".

The mixed-methods approach was the original choice for this study. According to Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie (1998: 27), the mixed-methods approach combines "the qualitative and quantitative approaches into the research methodology of a single study or a multiphased study". Creswell and Plano Clark (2007: 5) have argued that the mixed-methods approach is not simply a matter of combining qualitative and quantitative approaches; rather, it is "a research design with a philosophical assumption". Creswell (2015) argue that the mixed-methods approach can provide a better understanding of certain phenomena because it incorporates the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches, integrating the sets of data that each approach produces. This integration can help in overcoming the weaknesses that might be arise by using only one method.

The mixed-methods approach also enhances the validity of the research findings by combining statistical data with personal data such as opinions and experiences; thus, in short, this approach provides stronger evidence to corroborate the findings of a study (Creswell, 2015). In addition, Burke Johnson and Anthony Onwuegbuzie (2004) note that using a mixed-methods approach may bring valuable insights into and deeper understanding of an issue being investigated, especially in terms of facets of the issue that could be missed if only a single method is employed. This fuller picture may provide the knowledge that is necessary to better inform theory

and practice. This consideration is particularly important in the context of applied research.

The mixed-methods approach also poses some challenges for researchers. Researchers need to develop expertise in both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis, and they need to understand how to mix these methods appropriately (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Creswell (2015) also points out that some researchers still argue that mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches creates more fundamental problems since the two approaches are situated within different research paradigms, which can lead to difficulties when analysing data and interpreting results.

Despite the potential challenges and difficulties posed by the mixed-methods approach, the plan for this research is to adopt this approach for this applied research. Gathering quantitative and qualitative primary data, and then triangulating these data with secondary data from a range of sources, would offer a comprehensive view of the current situation in translation teaching. This approach also would provide a more solid evidence base to support the recommendations concerning the necessary changes needed to improve the translation training in Saudi universities.

3.7 Research Design

The purpose of a research design is to explain and justify the types of data to be gathered, how the types of data will be collected, and from which sources. The research design also specifies how these data will be analysed and how the results will relate to the questions and objectives of the research (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). Based on the initial research questions, the design originally chosen for this study was an "explanatory sequential mixed-methods design" (Creswell, 2015: 38) consisting of four stages, explained in more detail in the following sections. The original research design is represented in Figure 3.1.

Once the area under investigation had been mapped out by conducting a literature review (stage 1), the quantitative strand began with the collection of secondary data relating to the selected Saudi courses (course documentation and programmes) (stage 2). This collection of secondary data was then meant to be followed by the collection and statistical analysis of primary quantitative data from a sample of KAU staff and undergraduates (stage 3). Then to use two qualitative methods (interviews and focus groups) (stage 3) as well in order to explore the issues arising from the survey results with staff and students respectively. The content analysis of these qualitative data would thus have provided in-depth insights into the results of the quantitative data, thereby shaping the final recommendations generated for a competence-based curriculum design for translation training at KAU (stage 4). Details on how the research design was adjusted as the study progressed are discussed later in Sections 3.8.

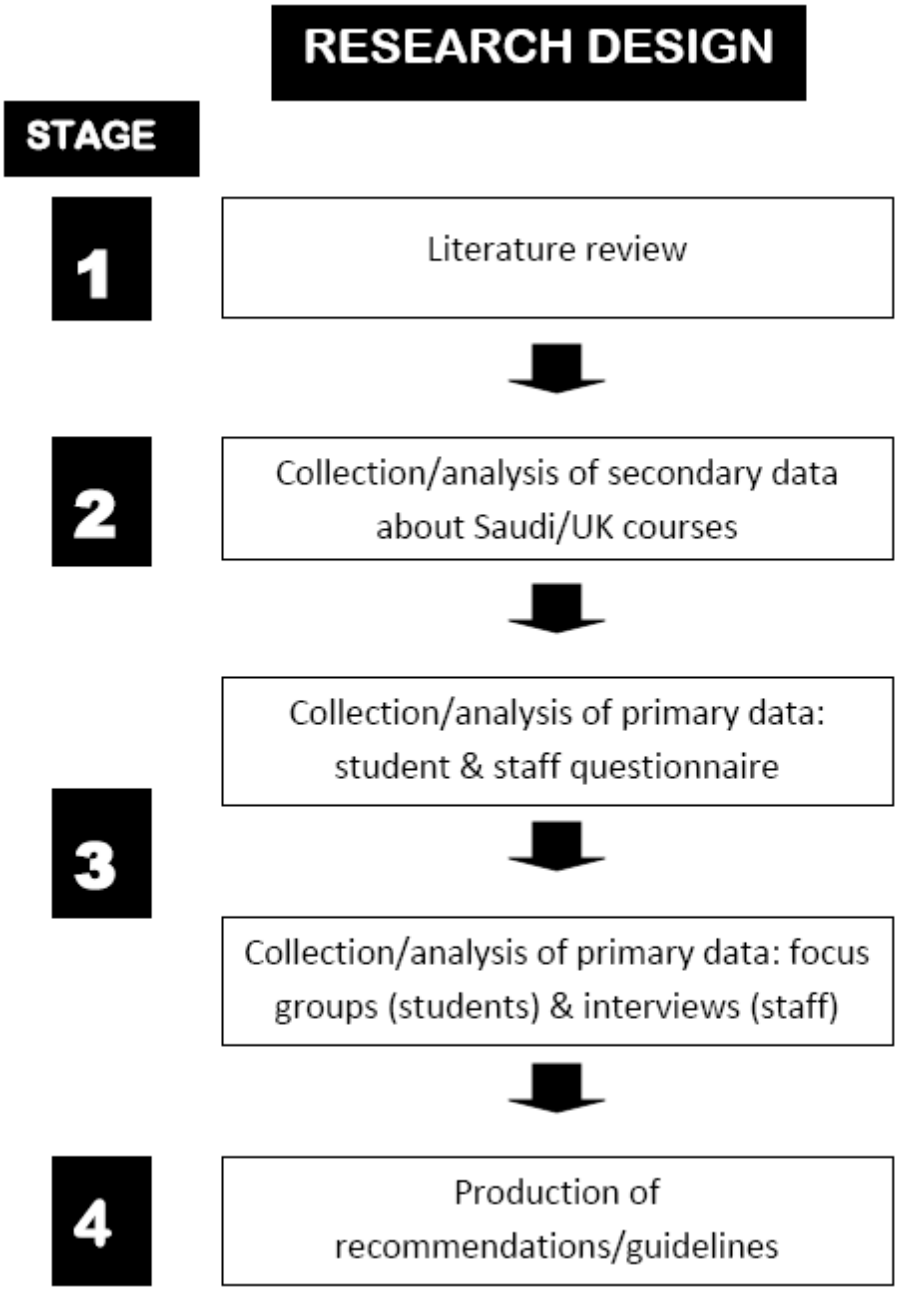


Figure 3.1: Original research design for the study

3.7.1 Stage 1

The initial stage involved identifying the key theories in this area and defining the concepts that are of central importance to this research. This stage also entailed

attempting to clarify from different perspectives those factors that need to be considered when developing the teaching, curriculum, and student skill sets appropriate for vocationally oriented undergraduate translation courses. This clarification was made possible by conducting a comprehensive literature review that was intended to address the research objectives and questions. The literature review included the following areas:

- The development of translator training and curriculum design within translation studies
- Models and frameworks of competence-based translator training
- The current needs of the market for professional translators in the Saudi context

This in-depth review was used to identify criteria for conducting the comparative critical assessment of core aspects of provision on current undergraduate translation courses at KAU. Aspects of this literature review were also to be revisited when considering the final recommendations in this study.

3.7.2 Stage 2

The second stage involved collecting secondary data from a sample of undergraduate translation courses taught in Saudi universities (see section 4.3). The original plan was to gather information about curriculum content, teaching and learning strategies, and course objectives and outcomes from

university/departmental websites. Where this information was not easily accessible, course leaders would be contacted to ask for further details. This information would then be transferred to Excel spreadsheets to facilitate the comparative analysis across the sample of Saudi university courses.

3.7.3 Stage 3

The next stage of the research focused on gathering information about the stakeholders in Saudi Arabia including staff, student and graduate and employer perspectives from a sample of Saudi universities on the current translation curriculum, illustrating the participant-oriented focus of this research.

The original plan was to collect further information after the results of the survey had been analysed statistically. Specifically, the plan was to use focus groups with students (see Section 3.8.3) and semi-structured interviews with staff (see Section 3.8.4) to gather more data from a smaller sample within the overall groups. The intention was to analyse these data in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum from the viewpoint of both students and staff. The data were then going to be triangulated with findings from the literature review to provide a map of deficiencies in the current provision (see Section 3.9).

However, some extra steps that had not been planned were nonetheless taken. Therefore, this stage of the research design aimed at improving the

representativeness of the findings. For example, a second questionnaire with a few small changes (see Chapter 7), was conducted with students who had recently completed their EFL/TS course in Saudi universities; to perceive these graduates' opinions about the translation modules they had studied. In addition, after undertaking the comparison of the planned stage 3 results with those of stage 2, the second questionnaire results gathered in stage 3 were also compared with those of stage 2. The employer questionnaire had not been part of the original plan either, but this step was added to assure the representativeness of the data collected per the original plans for stage 3 (see section 7.10). Using a different respondent group helped in specifying a mechanism to validate the findings from the first undergraduate questionnaire while adding new questions about the usefulness of the previous experience with EFL/TS courses in competing as translators in the Saudi translation industry (see Chapter 7).

The employer interview had not been part of the original plan either, but this step was added to assure the representativeness of the data collected per the original plans for stage 3 by also using a different set of questions to collect data from a different group which included seven employers in Saudi Arabia from different fields (see section 7.10). The intention behind collecting data from these top employers, who had an experience of hiring graduates of these courses, via interviews is to investigate their needs and expectations of the output of the EFL/ TS graduates to be able to validate the data obtained by Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) in MENA region and increase its representativeness (see Section 2.6).

These respondents were chosen based on their experience with EFL/TS courses either as teaching, studying or employing the graduates of these courses. Nonetheless, there is no link between choosing them as questionnaires were sent online to the universities where translation is taught either as autonomous of, or as integral to, EFL courses. Thus, this research incorporates both types of courses.

3.7.4 Stage 4

The results of the stage 3 analysis were meant to be combined with the mapping outcomes of stage 1 to produce a profile of the gaps identified. In addition, potential solutions for addressing them were to be obtained from any best practice found at other Saudi universities as a result of the comparative analysis conducted in stage 2. The validation mechanism used for improving the representativeness of the data collected from the questionnaires in stage 3 is also applied in this stage 4. After evaluating this representativeness, mapping is done with the findings from stage 2 so that any gaps present in the current translation curriculum in Saudi universities are identified. For example, this stage involved in comparing the skills acquired by the student and graduate questionnaires and the expectations from the employer interviews to realise the existence of the translation courses gaps.

This information has helped to form the basis of the recommendations and guidelines for establishing a new educational model. The aim is that this new model

could be applied to the curriculum design of the translation courses to be taught in the new Department of Translation at KAU (known as JU now) and other universities in Saudi Arabia. The plan included incorporating student perspectives on teaching and learning and on developing professional competence. It was originally intended that the recommendations would highlight potential continuing professional development needs for existing KAU staff. However, the pilot study revealed several issues when I attempted to carry this plan out in Saudi Arabia in the field.

3.8 Data Collection Methods and Tools

This participant-oriented research involved the translation agents, namely the teaching staff, students, graduates and employers. In addition, the study applied questionnaire surveys and interviews, both of which are methods that are considered to be staples of the sociological approach.

3.8.1 Quantitative: Questionnaire

Gabriela Saldanha and Sharon O'Brien (2013: 151) recommend the use of questionnaires to gather information about "student opinions about teaching and learning". Zoltan Dörnyei (2007) highlights some of the main strengths and weaknesses of this tool. Questionnaires allow a researcher to obtain data from a large number of individuals within a short space of time. Moreover, if the questionnaire is designed well, data can be processed relatively quickly. However,

on the negative side, Dörnyei (2007: 115) notes that the questionnaire is not necessarily the most useful instrument "for probing deeply into an issue", and it "usually results in rather superficial data". The questionnaire was chosen as the most appropriate means of collecting the quantitative data that were required for this study. The questionnaires were carefully designed to ensure that they fully addressed the research questions (Saldanha and O'Brien: 168). Though it was originally intended that the potential weaknesses of the questionnaire would be addressed by following up with focus groups and interviews to obtain more detailed perspectives on the translation course from study participants, as noted above, this additional step did not prove possible within the thesis timeframe and hence was not carried out.

Initially, two questionnaires were designed: one for members of staff involved in teaching translation courses and another for undergraduates studying EFL/TS at the same institution. The staff questionnaire was designed in English so that the results would not require translation. The staff questionnaire was intended to gather the following from the staff:

- their opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of the current provision;
- their attitudes towards introducing changes in the way translation is taught;
- their attitudes towards increasing the vocational orientation of translation courses.

The student questionnaire was produced in Arabic, which was the first language of all participants. It was judged that keeping the student questionnaire in Arabic would encourage more students to participate. The student questionnaire was intended to gather the following from the students:

- their perceptions about the main strengths and weaknesses of the current provision;
- their initial expectations about the course and the extent to which these expectations have been met;
- the fields the students are intending to work in after graduation.

Once it became clear that it would not be feasible or desirable to concentrate solely on KAU staff and students, a comparative element was introduced into the research. Namely, participants (staff and students) from a range of other Saudi universities where EFL/TS are taught were also incorporated into the research in order to increase the representativeness of the study.

This resulted in adding a graduate questionnaire and employer interview. The main intention behind this is to increase the representativeness of the data collected previously from student and staff and to increase the respondent group (see appendices 9 and 10). This questionnaire was produced in English as graduates were considered to be fluent enough to understand the questions and express themselves easily. The questionnaire was intended to gather the following:

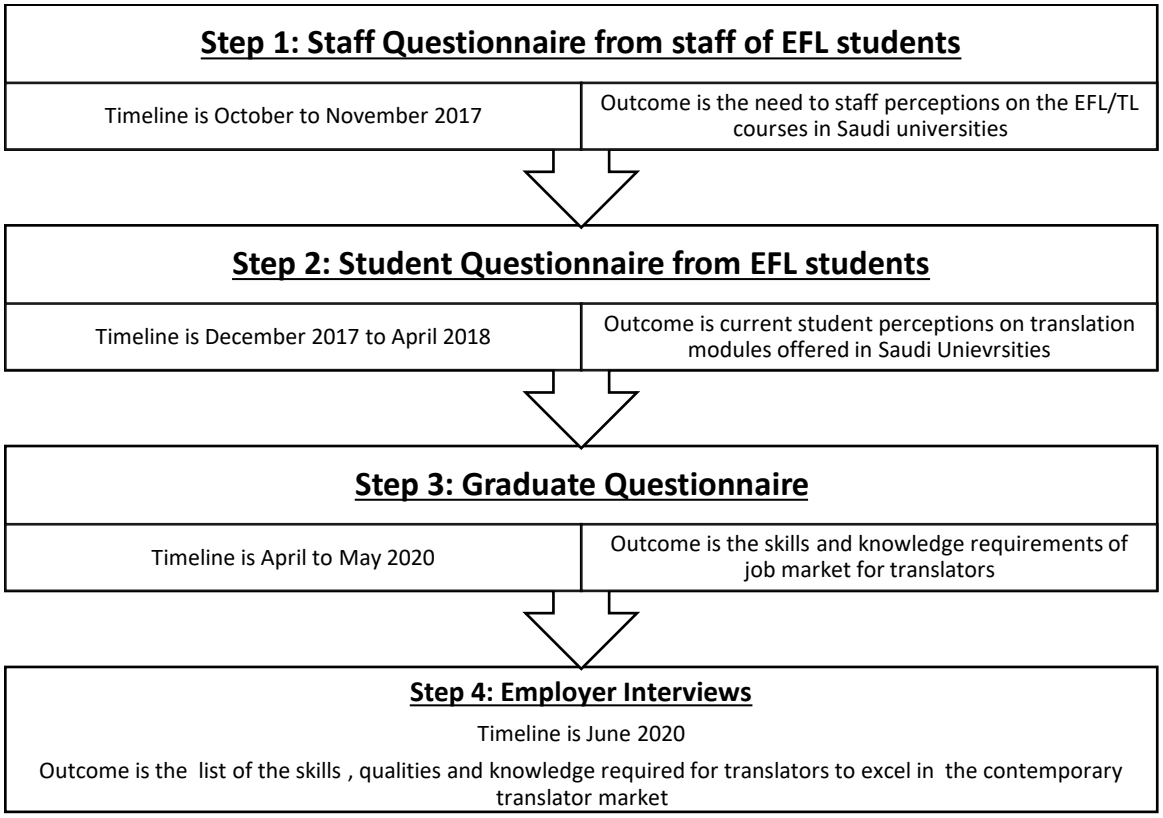
- The perceptions and views of the graduates about the translation courses they have completed in the Saudi universities.
- Their readiness or their appropriateness' for the job market.
- Their evaluation of their acquired translation skills and the final outcome.

It was relatively easy for me to obtain access to staff at KAU because of my personal connections with the university. I simply emailed the KAU staff with a link to the questionnaire on Google Forms. Prior to contacting KAU students, permission was sought from the relevant authorities. After permission had been obtained, a faculty administrator distributed by email a letter explaining the purposes of the study to all eligible students. This communication also included a link to the online questionnaire on Google Forms (see Appendices 6 and 7). Acquaintances at KAU were also briefed on the study and asked to encourage their students to take part. Since the Saudi academic year officially finishes at the end of December with the student assessment period, the decision was made to distribute questionnaires in late January 2018 at the start of the new academic session.

The process of recruiting questionnaire respondents from other Saudi universities proved to be more complicated, lengthy and obtaining permission was more difficult. Consequently, potential participants did not receive emails containing links to the questionnaire on Google Forms until late January 2018, when the new academic year was already beginning. Staff and students were already extremely

busy. As a result of an initially low response, I began to publicise the study on the social media platforms Twitter and WhatsApp, which are currently the most popular forms of communication in Saudi Arabia for both professional and personal purposes. In addition, I enlisted the help of a professional translator who frequently tweets about different aspects of translation and has a large number of followers, many of them are students. He tweeted about the study to his followers and also shared the link on his own webpage to help me increase the number of participants and broaden the scope of responses. These tweets were of a great help in recruiting not only to the student questionnaire but also participants for the graduate questionnaire. The timeline and the sequential way of implementing different stages of the research and the outcome of each of these stages is tabulated below (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Research stages timeline



Before starting to fill in the questionnaire, all respondents who were interested in taking part in the study were required to read and complete a consent form. Since the Google Forms software only allows fully completed questionnaires to be submitted, all the questionnaires submitted could be considered to be valid since all of the obligatory sections were fully filled in; thus, it was not necessary to remove any partially or incorrectly completed forms before beginning data analysis.

Moreover, semi-structured interviews were conducted with top employers in Saudi Arabia from different sectors to validate the research. The aim was to gather the interviewees' opinions about the graduates, their skills as well as the interviewees' evaluation of the graduates' output and perceived strengths and weaknesses. Due

to the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, the recruitment of employers for interviews was time consuming and challenging; the lockdown and closure of many companies, as well as social distancing, meant participants were very busy while working from home. In addition, all participants preferred phone rather than video interviews. Ten employers were contacted by phone, but only seven took part in the interviews who had an experience of hiring graduates of EFL/TS courses (see Appendix 10).

Because the questionnaires were distributed online and due to the outbreak of Covid-19, the repetitiveness of some collected data might be influenced by the small number of responses received from some universities. For example: in the Staff questionnaire (20 respondents in total) only one form was received from each of PNU, QU and TU (see Table 5.2); in the student questionnaire (134 in total) there is one respondent from UQU, KKU, JU (see Table 6.1); in the graduate questionnaire (42 in total) 1 response from QU, two from KKU (Table 7.1). However, the representativeness of each of these small numbers (1 or 2) and the percentage they represent in relation to the whole sample in a particular institution, might affect the validity of the conclusions about their opinions (see Section 9.6 on limitations), as one respondent's opinion might not reflect the general picture in an institution. However, the high number of KAU respondents, being the focus of the research, is reasonable compared to the total number of respondents. Therefore, data collected is still relevant; generalisations could be made for KAU and robust conclusions could be drawn for similar institutions that have a good number of responses.

3.8.2 Data processing and analysis

With regard to the processing of the data, as each questionnaire arrived, it was allocated an alphanumerical identifier showing the institution where the respondent was based plus a unique individual numerical identifier (see Table 3.). Thus, the first questionnaire received from a KAU member of staff became KAU1, the second KAU2, and so on. In the case of students, the identifier was followed by S (to indicate 'student'); thus, KAU8 is the eighth member of staff at KAU to respond, and KAU8S indicates the eighth student at KAU to respond. This system ensured that student responses could always be distinguished from staff responses. Using this system also meant that it was possible both to track individual comments from a particular respondent relating to specific courses and also to establish an overall profile of provision at each of the universities, if needed.

Table 3.1 University identifiers

ID	Institution
AIU	Al-Imam University
JU	Jeddah University
KAR	King Abdulaziz University (Rabigh Campus)
KAU	King Abdulaziz University (Jeddah)
KKU	King Khalid University
KSU	King Saud University
OTH	Other university (unidentified)
PNU	Princess Nora University
QU	Qassim University
SEU	Saudi Electronic University
TAU	Taiba University
TU	Taif University

Google Forms was used because of its ability to process responses and generate charts and graphs for statistical analysis. One of the benefits of using questionnaires designed by Google Forms is that responses to closed questions and to questions gauging attitudes using the five-point Likert scale can be processed automatically once all the questionnaires have been received. Another of the benefits of this software is that the summary can be presented visually in the form of charts and graphs, according to the format chosen by the researcher. However, one of the software's disadvantages is that any responses to open-ended questions are simply collated; these raw data then have to be processed and analysed manually by the researcher. Nonetheless, responses to open-ended questions, which provide valuable insights into the statistical data gathered, had to be gathered for this study. Responses to the open-ended questions for the questionnaires varied in length from brief phrases to full paragraphs.

Analysis of the quantitative data collected from the questionnaire is done by using discrete statistics, in which the percentage of responses is calculated. The formula that is used to calculate the average that is applicable for all the questions in the staff questionnaire is in Equation (7) (See Chapter5). Moreover, the formula in Equation (8) is used for the student questionnaire (See Chapter 6) and the graduate and employer questionnaire (See Chapter7).

As part of the data processing, each individual response was tagged with the student's unique alphanumerical identifier. Tagging responses was important for several reasons. Primarily, the tags often illuminated valuable insights into the statistical data gathered and helped to explain the reasons why certain students had responded as they did, enhancing the qualitative dimension of the research. The tags also meant that, if necessary, responses could be re-grouped by university to identify any trends or inconsistencies or unusual patterns in responses. Where any instances of this kind occurred, they were noted and discussed.

The format and the wording of the items for both questionnaires were checked by supervisors. A version translated into Arabic was then checked for linguistic accuracy by a lecturer in Saudi Arabia with the necessary qualifications and expertise from KAU's Arabic Language centre, and any necessary revisions were made.

The draft version of both questionnaires was piloted with a small group of recent EFL/TS graduates from KAU who were also asked to provide feedback on the questionnaire. Conducting a pilot study before the main study is key to ensuring that any potential problems with a questionnaire are identified and corrected. A pilot study also helps to ensure that no difficulties will arise with the procedures to be followed with administration of a questionnaire (Dörnyei, 2007).

Information concerning how the ethical concerns raised by this data collection method were addressed is provided in Section 3.10.

3.8.3 Qualitative method 1: Focus group

The original intention was to use focus groups as a useful qualitative method to complement the quantitative data gained from the survey questionnaires. Students were going to be recruited for the focus group discussion by asking them to indicate their interest in participating on a form distributed with the questionnaire. Five focus groups, each with six to eight self-selected undergraduate students from the European Languages and Literature Department, were planned. All groups were to be facilitated by the researcher herself. The discussion was going to focus on the following:

- their experiences of the current course;
- their opinions on how the current course could be improved;
- the extent to which they think the course prepares graduates to work as translators after graduation;
- their attitudes towards incorporating different teaching/learning strategies in the course.

A focus group takes the form of an informal group discussion focused on a particular topic or set of issues. A facilitator, who is usually the researcher, ensures

that the discussion remains focused on the subject being investigated and that all participants have the chance to voice their opinions (Krueger and Casey, 2015).

Focus groups offer qualitative researchers many benefits. If carefully planned and correctly managed, focus groups can be an efficient method for obtaining data from multiple participants simultaneously (Krueger and Casey, 2015). The sense of belonging to a group can also mean that participants feel more relaxed about sharing information; in that case, responses tend to be more in depth and nuanced, and a variety of perspectives is likely to emerge (Krueger and Casey, 2015).

However, focus groups also have some specific disadvantages as a data collection method. Richard Krueger and Marry-Anne Casey (2015) explain that group dynamics can have a negative impact on the discussion. For example, sometimes one individual can dominate the other members of the group, or participants who lack the confidence to express their own opinions may simply agree with the opinion of others. Consequently, the results might not necessarily be an accurate representation of the differing opinions amongst the members of the group. In addition, from the researcher's perspective, transcription and analysis of focus group data requires a considerable time investment, particularly because multiple participants are involved. Moreover, in this study, the focus groups were to be conducted in Arabic, the L1 of all participants and the researcher, meaning that any material to be used would have needed to be translated.

Unfortunately, due to time limitations and the logistical difficulties of organising this activity, it was not feasible to collect data in this way. As students and graduates had often written lengthy answers to the open-ended items on the questionnaire, data on the issues mentioned above were gathered from this information instead.

3.8.4 Qualitative method 2: Interviews

The original intention was to supplement the quantitative data gained from the survey questionnaires with interviews with a non-random or purposive sample (Bryman, 2015) of staff selected from among those individuals responsible for designing the materials currently taught on the course. This type of sampling would have been used because this element of the research is focused on gathering information from a specified group within the wider population (Bryman, 2015). Instead, however, the interviews were conducted with a selected sample of top employers in the Saudi industry in order to improve the representativeness and acquire a clear picture of employers' expectations, opinions on EFL/TS graduates and views on the market requirements.

The planned semi-structured interviews were intended to explore with participants issues that had arisen from the results of the questionnaire in order to provide more detailed insights into the possible reasons for these responses. In particular, the intention was to ask interviewees about the following:

- Their opinions on perceived weaknesses and gaps they encounter with the graduates
- their opinions on factors behind weaknesses/ strengths; and their opinion on introducing changes and increasing the vocational orientation of translation courses.
- The graduates' appropriateness to start their translation-related careers in the job market.

According to Dörnyei (2007: 45) the combination of both questionnaires and interviews is a particularly useful and valuable one because the former, as a quantitative method, provides evidence about the distribution of a phenomenon, while the latter, as a qualitative method, reveals more about the nature of this phenomenon.

There are three main types of interviews (structured, semi-structured, and unstructured) (Bryman, 2015). Semi-structured interviews were the most suited for the purposes of this study. Semi-structured interview provides a general framework for the interviewer, thereby ensuring that the necessary research focus can be maintained, but it also provides flexibility. The order in which questions are asked can be varied, and interesting issues which emerge can be explored by probing further to obtain more in-depth insights (Bryman, 2015).

Raymond Opdenakker (2006) notes that although interviews allow rich qualitative data to be collected, inexperienced researchers need to be aware of the challenges that interviews represent. Firstly, in terms of resources, conducting interviews is a time-consuming process for both the researcher and the participants. In addition, time must also be allowed for the transcription and analysis process, as well as good communication and interpersonal skills are required to facilitate effective interaction during the interview. Since this study had intended to conduct the interviews in Arabic, the L1 of all interviewees and the researcher, the element of translation would have needed to be considered as well.

Given these potential difficulties with interviews, a training exercise in the form of a mock interview was carried out prior to fieldwork with another postgraduate researcher whose L1 was Arabic. This mock interview gave me as a researcher, useful feedback on the wording of the questions and her own performance as interviewer. It also provided valuable information about how long the interview would take. It was also realised that an interview question guide would need to be produced before conducting the interviews to ensure that the issues that were covered were relevant to the research objectives.

Unfortunately, as with the student focus groups, it did not prove possible to collect data from KAU staff in through interview, as the staff members were all too busy with teaching commitments during the period allocated for Saudi fieldwork. Instead, additional contextual information on the issues mentioned above was sought from

other Saudi studies to supplement the questionnaire data. However, the quantitative data collected from undergraduate student questionnaire was insufficient for gaining deeper insights of the gap between the translation courses and the market needs. This has resulted in collecting qualitative data through interviews with the top employers in the Saudi industry which graduates usually consider when applying for a job (see Section 7.10).

3.9 Research Quality

The concept and determination of research quality depends on the approach which has been adopted. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) observe that using a mixed-methods approach can lead to a significant challenge when assessing the quality of the results obtained from data analysis since quantitative and qualitative methods relate to different philosophical views. For this reason, they suggest that the quality of each strand should be assessed separately.

In quantitative research, two key indicators are typically used to assess quality: validity and reliability. A further distinction is usually made between 'content validity' and 'external validity'. Content validity means that the data collection tool used has dealt with all aspects of the investigated concepts fairly and comprehensively (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). In the case of studies carried out in an educational context, content validity can be judged by the comprehensiveness of the search of existing literature and by the extent to which the methodology presented is systematic and based on an appropriate theoretical framework (Cohen et al., 2007).

External validity can be defined as "the degree to which the results can be generalised to the wider population, cases or situations" (Cohen et al., 2007: 136). It can be ensured by "careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatment of the data" (Cohen et al., 2007: 133).

In qualitative research, different criteria are considered important. The first of these is referred to as credibility, which John Creswell and Dana Miller (2000: 124) define as the extent to which the researcher's account "accurately represents participants' realities of the social phenomena and is credible to them". The second quality indicator is dependability, which focuses on "the extent to which variation in a phenomenon can be tracked or explained consistently using the 'human instrument' across different contexts" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009: 209).

In general terms, the quality of a study can be judged on the extent to which the research process is made transparent. In the case of this study, following Louis Cohen et al. (2007), transparency has been maintained by providing a clear, detailed, and thorough description of all aspects of the study, including how the research was designed, how the research tools were created, and the procedures that were used for gathering and analysing data. Transparency allows other researchers to decide if the conclusions that are presented were justified. In addition to transparency, representativeness of a study is important to assure the research quality. This depends on the collection of data from a different group using the same questions and/or from a different group using different questions (Adil,

2020). In this study, the representativeness of the collected data is assured in two ways (1) by collecting the data from different group of graduates through questionnaire and (2) collecting data from different group of employers using different questions through interview.

In addition, triangulation can also be used to increase the reliability and validity of the results obtained (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). As Saldanha and O'Brien (2013: 23) note, triangulation in research involves using two methods (in this case, one quantitative, the other qualitative) to collect and analyse primary data that relate to a single research question and then comparing the results of the two data collection methods with additional secondary data. Triangulation thus enhances the generalisability of results, which relates to "making claims about the larger population" (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013: 36). One of the objectives of this research was to devise recommendations and guidelines concerning a new educational model to be applied to the curriculum design of the translation courses to be taught at KAU. The triangulation applied in this study makes it more likely that these recommendations will be applicable to the teaching of translation at other Saudi universities as well.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

All research is required to adhere to the ethical principles of academic investigation. Accordingly, ethical approval was obtained from the University of Wolverhampton

Ethics Committee before commencing the fieldwork in Saudi Arabia. In addition, all necessary permissions were obtained from any Saudi HE institutions prior to beginning fieldwork.

The following steps were taken to ensure that the study followed all applicable ethical principles:

All potential recruits (staff, graduates and students) were initially briefed by email in Arabic (their L1) about the nature of the study and were fully informed of what their agreement to participate would involve. It was also made clear that participation would be voluntary and that participants could withdraw at any point of the study. A consent form, also in Arabic, was also provided to all participants. This consent form was accompanied by an information sheet that explained in clear, non-specialist language the purpose, methods, and intended possible uses of the research. Participants were also informed about how anonymity and confidentiality of data was to be guaranteed.

In order to protect the identity of participants and ensure that they could not be identified by the researcher or others, all data were anonymised. Participants were allocated an alphanumerical identifier, known only to the researcher, and this identifier was used when citing quotes from them. Any information relating to names and contact details of participants recruited for the study was kept separately from other data collected and stored securely.

All forms of data obtained from participants or relating to them were kept confidential and protected by security applications together with passwords. Any backups made of the data were also treated in a similar fashion.

3.11 Summary

This chapter began by considering the research framework for the thesis and the questions that the thesis addresses. It examined how the framework and questions, together with philosophical underpinnings of this research, have shaped the research design and the approach adopted, namely, mixed methods.

After outlining the four stages of the research design, a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods was indicated to be used under the mixed research method. Survey was the research strategy used in this research to collect the qualitative data using the semi-structured interviews and the quantitative data using the questionnaires. The criteria for ensuring the quality of this research were also discussed. The chapter concluded by examining the ethical considerations relevant to this study and explaining how the thesis has adhered to all required research protocols.

A detailed description was provided of the quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and tools originally meant to be used, namely the questionnaire,

focus groups, and semi-structured interviews. Consideration was given to the strengths and weaknesses of each method, followed by a detailed account of how these tools were to be used in this study.

4 Translator Competence

4.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by reviewing several frameworks that have been developed for curriculum development, comparing and contrasting the approaches taken. These frameworks include Kelly's (2005) analysis of translator competence, the European Master's in Translation (EMT) framework, and Greere and Tătaru's (2008) framework. Based on the comparison among these three frameworks, the justification behind using Kelly's (2005) framework categorisation of translator competence is given in this chapter. This comparison helped in justifying Kelly's (2005) competence framework as appropriate for the Saudi undergraduate courses analysed in this study, and it allows the results of this analysis to be compared in Chapter 8 with those obtained by Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017). The comparison in Chapter 8 based on Kelly's (2005) framework categorisation in turn allows the thesis to identify significant differences between Saudi courses and courses offered elsewhere in the MENA region.

4.2 Frameworks of Translator Competence

As noted in Chapter 2, since the 1980s, researchers have made various attempts to identify a set of core translation competences; having a set of key competences is perceived as a crucial prerequisite to producing a training framework. This framework, in turn, may be used in the design of a translator training programme that offers the appropriate modules, materials, methodologies, and forms of assessment to ensure that students acquire these core competences.

Initially, more systematic approaches to curriculum development and course planning for translator training have been developed as a result of theoretical insights from academic disciplines, including translation studies, linguistics, and L2 pedagogy. These approaches have aided in improving the effectiveness of the training that students receive and ensure that students are prepared for employment as translation professionals. More recently, increasing emphasis has been placed on ensuring that translator training programmes incorporate input from employers and professional associations; such input can provide useful information about the current needs of the translation market, in addition to identifying possible emerging trends within the industry.

As Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017: 198) explain, "planning training content in view of what the profession requires is necessary, because it affects the employability of new graduates". In Saudi Arabia, planning is particularly important because the competition for translation jobs is made even greater by the availability of a highly qualified non-Saudi workforce from across the world and the numbers of students graduating from EFL courses due to the current "youth bulge".

Recently, the concept of "future proofing" degree courses has become prominent in the field of HE. This concept is based on a general acknowledgement that the "fourth industrial revolution of embedded technology" (Dallison, 2018: online) is likely to radically change the skill set and knowledge that graduates from all disciplines – not just science and technology – will need. John Eisenberg (2019)

notes that, when members of the Global University Leaders Forum met at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in February 2019 to explore the future of HE and the role that it should play in society, they identified key topics that would shape how university courses may prepare students to face future challenges. Three of these topics would also be applicable to curriculum planning for translator training:

- Introducing the concept of data literacy to all students so that they know how to most effectively manage, evaluate, and exploit the masses of information now being generated;
- Embedding ethics into courses so that students of all disciplines are able to understand significant issues that may be at stake when making decisions and anticipate potential problems; and
- Embedding the notion that continuing professional development is a given because technological developments make it inevitable that re-skilling and up-skilling will become an integral feature of employability in a rapidly evolving global economy (Eisenberg, 2019).

Individuals involved in curriculum design also need to be aware not only of the immediate needs of the translation industry, but also of the broader societal and technological developments, "so that future graduates become aware of both the challenges and opportunities that they represent and can adapt their skills and practices accordingly" (Toudic and Krause, 2017: 2). According to Kelly (2010: 89), if universities do intend to future-proof curricular design by attempting to identify future societal and market needs, "profound knowledge of the present and future

trends, close contact with the market, and forward-looking staff responsible for the design process" is required.

The following sections discuss three different models or frameworks used for designing translator training programmes and/or evaluating the degree to which these programmes help to develop translator competence.

4.2.1 Kelly (2002; 2005; 2008)

Kelly (2002: 14-15) originally defines translation competence as "the macrocompetence that comprises the different capacities, skills, knowledge and even attitudes that professional translators possess and which are involved in translation as an expert activity". Kelly argues that this macrocompetence was, in turn, composed of seven sub-competences. In order to achieve the overall concept of translation competence, it is necessary to fulfil all of the sub-competences. In terms of curriculum design, these sub-competences are categorised as follows:

- Communicative and textual competence (language skills);
- Cultural and intercultural competence (extra-linguistic skills);
- Subject area competence;
- Professional and instrumental competence (research and technology);
- Strategic competence (transfer);
- Interpersonal competence; and
- Attitudinal or psycho-physiological competence (Kelly, 2002: 32-33)

According to Kelly (2005: 36), if a course is designed to develop all of these competences, successful completion of the course will mean the following:

> Students will have acquired the necessary set of competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) to be able to join the translation profession in any of its specialised areas in [the country where the course was delivered] or abroad at a junior level.

Like many of those who produced translation competence models (see Section 2.5), Kelly (2005: 23-24) argues that, before designing a curriculum to train professional translators, it is important to understand what these professionals are required to do. Kelly opted to use job advertisements and job descriptions as a means of assessing current market needs in the translation industry. Kelly (2005: 22) also notes the importance of considering the institutional and social context of training and establishing course outcomes/objectives with input from the academic disciplines, from the professional sector (standards and industry needs), from society at large, and from student/trainee profiles. According to Kelly, all these elements should contribute, to some extent, to curriculum content in terms of skills, course structure, methodologies, and teaching approaches used with students. Section 4.3 returns to the application of Kelly's model.

Kelly also produced a training needs analysis for translator trainers by examining job descriptors using the UK Higher Education Academy's Professional Standards

Framework for teaching and supporting learning in HE to identify competences required by individuals involved in translator training.[16]

4.2.2 Greere and Tataru (2008)

Greere and Tătaru (2008) use a model originally devised by Greere (2003) (see Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1) to examine the different competences required to perform as an authorised translator[17] and a literary translator, illustrating these differences by focusing on a Romanian case study of Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca.

Greere and Tătaru (2008) explain that, in the Romanian context, an authorised translator is somebody who has applied to the Ministry of Justice to receive authorisation to translate texts with legal relevance or official documents such as degrees, diplomas, certificates, contracts, and court decisions for use by legal institutions, including notary offices and law courts. A literary translator, however, focuses on texts of a literary nature and may also be authorised, but must apply for this authorisation from the Ministry of Culture.

Table 4.1: Translation competences as defined in Greere and Tătaru (2008)

Organisational Competence	The "ability to organise the translation work in all its aspects including organisation of the business […], the research […] and the communication process with collaborators" (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 103)

[16] The most up-to-date version (2011) of this framework is available at https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/UK%20Professional%20Standards%20Framework.pdf

[17] Greere and Tătaru (2008) also discuss the differences between translating and interpreting, but the discussion here is limited to the former skill.

Communicative Competence	The "ability to initiate and sustain a communicative relationship with collaborators […] for the purpose of ensuring task fulfilment" (Greere, 2003: 134, cited in Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 105)
Research Competence	The "ability to seek, extract and validate textual and client information relevant for task fulfilment by researching resources available or by engaging expert consultancy" (Greere, 2003: 134, cited in Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 105)
IT Competence	"Skills and knowledge relating to the use of computers for purposes of translation" (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 106)
Language Competence	Knowledge of the "niceties of the grammatical and lexical system of the source and target language […] as well as the preferred syntactic and morphological conventions" (Neubert, 2000: 8, cited in Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 107)
Cultural Competence	Knowledge of those elements that are "strikingly but also less visibly contrastive (or identical) between source and target culture patternings" (Neubert, 2000: 10, cited in Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 108) in respect to "historical, political, economic, cultural, etc. aspects in the respective countries" (Schaeffner 2000: 146, cited in Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 108) including "socio-behavioural custom patternings" (Greere, 2003: 137, cited in Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 108)
Textual/Discourse Competence	Being able to identify and reproduce "normative usages and arrangements of types and genres of texts" (Neubert, 2000: 8, cited in Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 109)
Subject Competence	Knowledge about the subject tackled in the text. Important aspects include topicality of subject matter for a given culture, culturally taboo or trivial topics, subject interconnectivity to other subjects within the same field or within different fields, relevance of subject matter for a given domain etc. subject competence refers to domain specificity as well as to cultural specificity (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 110)
Transfer Competence	Once discrepancies between SC [source culture] production/reception and TC [target culture] reception have been identified, the translator must design such transfer solutions that will prove effective for the act of communication. In the situation where TC recipients have different communicative backgrounds, the translator must

	devise solutions that will facilitate communication (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 111)
Revision Competence	The application of a quality assessment filter to the [translation] process and the end product (Greere, 2003: 139, cited in Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 111)
Documentation Competence	The ability to systemise translation work for future re-usage in such cases where texts with similar extratextual or intratextual features will be commissioned for translation (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 111).

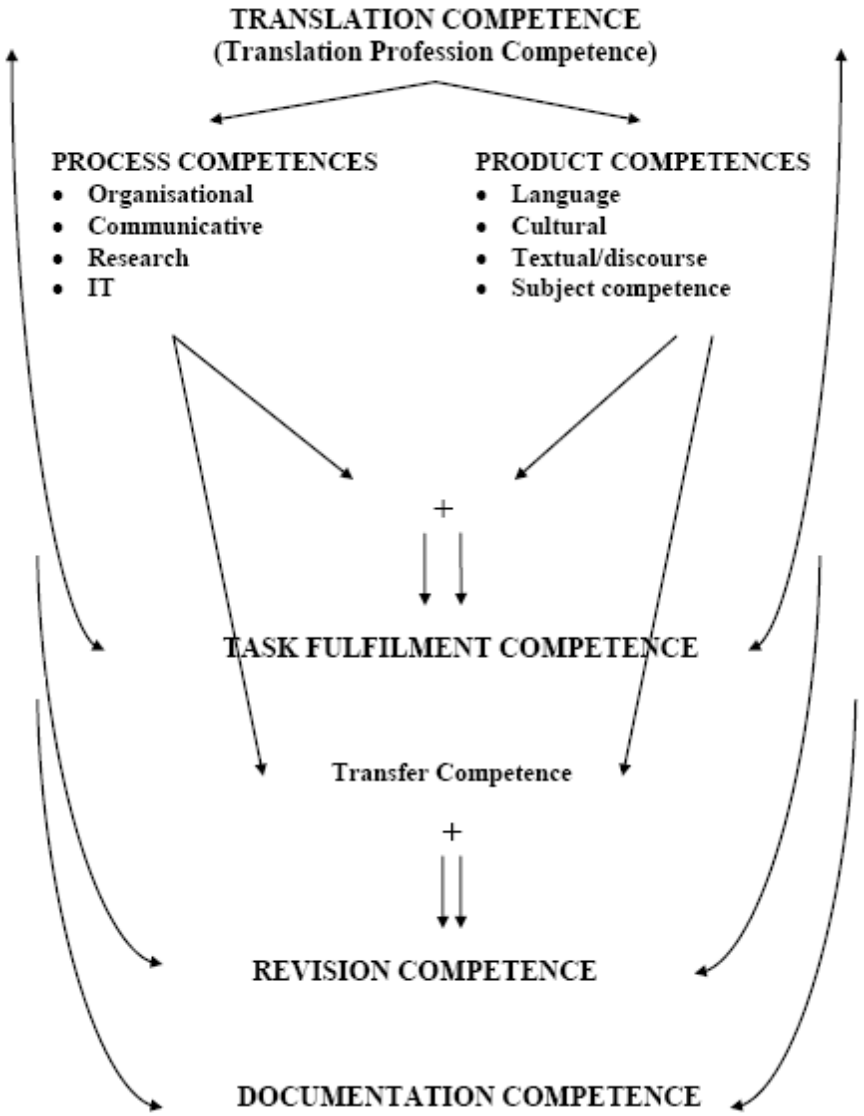


Figure 4.1: Translation competence model (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 104, adapted after Greere, 2003: 131)

Similar to many Romanian HE institutions, Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca offers two distinct forms of provision. The first is specialised training focusing on interpreting and translation based at the Department of Applied Modern Languages, and the second is EFL-based training based at the Department of English Language and Literature. After conducting an analysis of the curriculum on offer for both departments, the authors evaluated the extent to which each degree prepares students to assume roles as authorised translators or literary translators. The authors also used the results of the analysis to reflect more generally on the importance of ensuring that authorisation of translators is a rigorous, systematic process that guarantees that individuals are competent to perform this function.

While a case study from Romania may not initially seem to be of relevance to Saudi Arabia and the current study, there are some similarities and points of comparison that make this article worth considering. Firstly, both societies have witnessed a boom in the need for translation services in recent years. Secondly, as the authors note, "a lot of amateurism is present on [sic] the Romania translation market" (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 119). This amateurism is also true in Saudi Arabia, as discussed elsewhere (see Section 2.6). In addition, in Romanian and Saudi cultures, there is a high demand for authorised translation for bureaucratic and legal purposes. Furthermore, both countries have an existing system of authorisation of translation, which is currently not based on competence or subject to quality assurance or recognised industry standards.

Greere and Tătaru's (2008) analysis of translator competence also highlights several points often overlooked in the Saudi context, where many freelance translators are actually graduates from traditional EFL courses with little if any training in translation skills or in subject-specific texts from legal or technical domains. The authors note that "the level of linguistic competence (especially domain-specific competence) will vary among native speakers" because "being born into a language does not automatically make one a competent native-speaker of that language" (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 99). As discussed in Section 1.3, the concept of native-speaker competency is even more complex in Arabic-speaking countries due to Arabic's diglossic nature; namely, prospective and practising translators operating in this language must actively maintain their mastery of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).

A related point in terms of language competence to be considered is that "the degree of difficulty for the transfer direction foreign language into mother tongue is different to the direction mother tongue into foreign language" (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 99). In Saudi Arabia, an individual's level of competence when translating English to Arabic texts is not likely to be equivalent to that when dealing with rendering Arabic texts into English. In some countries, professional translators are normally only allowed/expected to take on translation assignments that involve translating to their L1. However, in Saudi Arabia, it is not unusual for translators to be expected to work in both language directions. Therefore, there is a necessity,

when determining market needs, to pay attention to language direction and ensuring that it is reflected in curriculum design, methods, and materials to prepare graduates adequately for the realities of the profession.

Working through each competence in the framework (see Table 4.1), the authors highlight some of the differences between the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to translate authorised texts, as opposed to literary texts, emphasising that these differences are often diametrically opposed. Therefore, legal texts are shaped by conventionality, while literary texts privilege originality (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 105). In legal discourse, the translator's role is to disambiguate and avoid creating grey areas (unless they exist in the ST for a reason). On the other hand, in the case of literary discourse, particularly that of poetry, this role is more often one of carefully preserving ambiguity in one's linguistic choices. As Greere and Tătaru (2008: 107) state, "legal translation seeks for monosemy, while literary translation exploits polysemy in all its aspects".

After analysing the differences in the competences developed by the curriculum of the BA course provided by the Department of Applied Modern Languages and that based in the Department of English Language and Literature, as well as considering the extent to which the courses prepare graduates for careers as authorised translators and literary translators, the authors conclude as follows:

> [A]lthough language graduates can […] apply for authorisation, we must warn against the misconception that university language graduates are

> competence-fit to perform authorised translations, let alone high school graduates. […] LMA graduates will have great difficulties in performing literary translation and so will language graduates embracing the profession of authorised translator. Until the authorisation process changes, it is up the graduate himself (with the assistance of the guiding tutors) to understand the nature of competences s/he possesses, the degree of difficulty entailed by the two activities and to venture on a professional course only after proper self-reflexion. (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 107).

The authors' final comment places the onus on students and tutors to ensure that the course that they choose to follow provides them with the competences required to function within the translation industry. These needs highlight the necessity for career guidance in the early stages and providing students with the information and skills to make meaningful decisions.

4.2.3 European Master's in Translation competence framework (2017)

This model was originally a large-scale, joint initiative between the European Commission's Directorate-General for translation and European universities providing postgraduate translator training to define translation competence and establish a set of standards that could be used to assure postgraduate translation course quality (EMT, 2017: online). The EMT model combines elements from both translation training and professional practices and is underpinned by the principle

that a theoretical model applied in an academic environment and any curricula design based on this model must be capable of being relevant to the needs of the professional market and/or professional experience.

The EMT network published its first translator/translation competence framework in 2009, which was quickly accepted by universities and the language industry as one of the most widely respected benchmark statements for translator training standards within the European Union. Increasing numbers of non-European universities also use the model to inform the design of their postgraduate translator training programmes.

The first version of the EMT model is illustrated in Figure 4.2 and consists of six interdependent competences. Two of these competences, namely translation service provision competence and intercultural competence, were further sub-divided into interpersonal and production dimensions and sociolinguistic and 'textual' dimensions, respectively. As the representation of the model suggests, no hierarchy of competences is assumed, with each area carrying equal importance and "mastery of the six areas of competence leads to mastery of a transversal '*supercompetence',* which can be termed competence in translation" (EMT, 2017: online, emphasis in original).

Although the original EMT model, with its various sub-competences and sub-sub-divisions, was intended to offer an authoritative, detailed analysis of the translation

competence construct, it proved to be so complex that those wishing to use it found it a somewhat unwieldy instrument to apply in real-life contexts. Within its six sub-competences, the original EMT framework consisted of almost fifty skills. In addition, rapid technological developments and changing market needs meant that the framework needed to be updated. After a process of widespread consultation with academics and translation practitioners, a new version was released in 2017. However, as the title suggests, this framework is aimed at competences required for postgraduate students. As Figure 4.3 illustrates, the model is nonetheless a useful point of reference for this study.

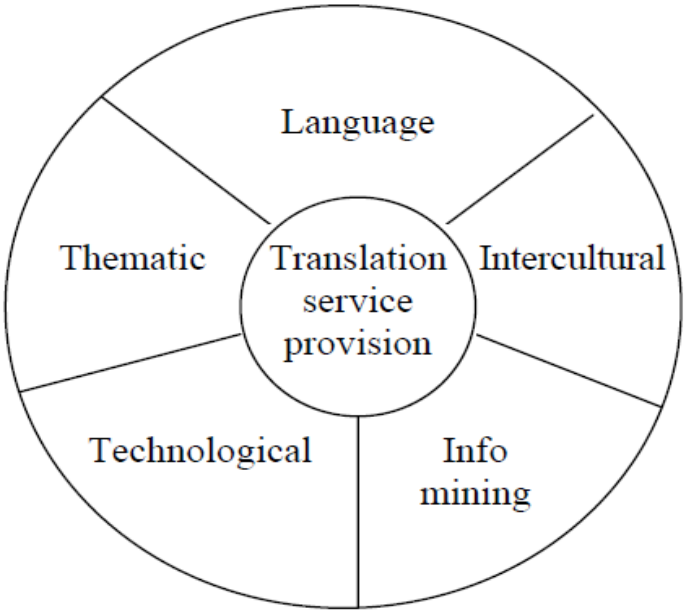


Figure 4.2: Overview of EMT model of translation competence v.1 (2009)

The EMT framework defines competence as "the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development" (Toudic and Krause, 2017: 3).

Table 4.2: EMT translation competences v.1 (2009)

COMPETENCE	**EXAMPLES**
Translation service provision competence	How to market services, negotiate with a client, manage time and budget, or handle invoicing
Language competence	How to summarise texts
Intercultural competence	How to understand presuppositions or allusions
Information mining competence	How to search terminology databases and familiarity with a series of databases
Technological competence	How to use a particular translation tool
Thematic competence	Knowledge about a specialist field

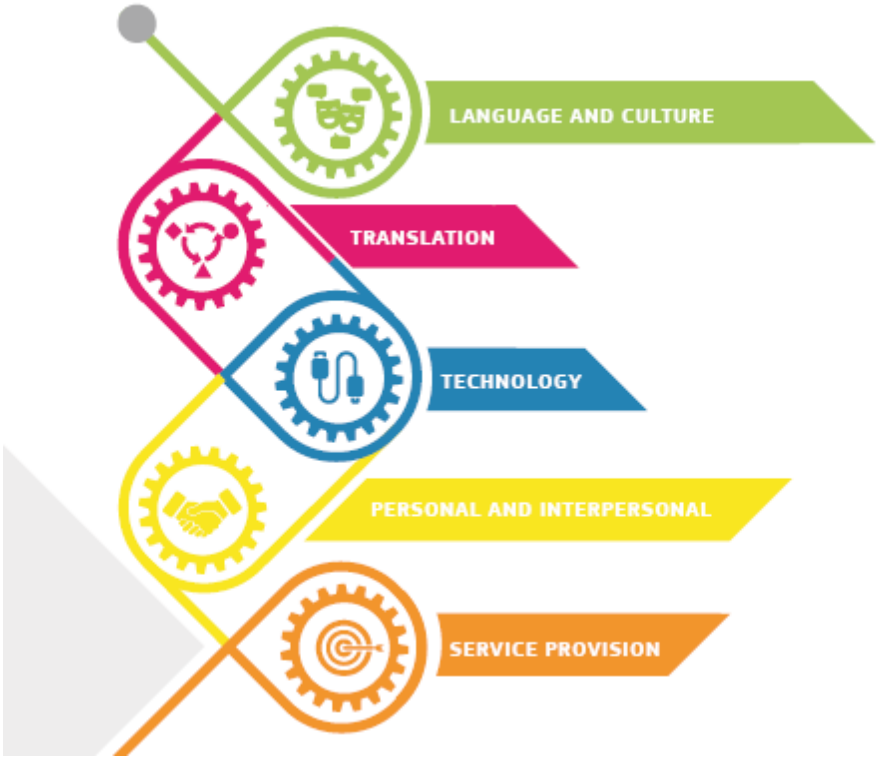


Figure 4.3: Overview of EMT model of translation competence v.2 (2017)

Table 4.3: EMT framework of Competences and definitions

COMPETENCE	EMT DEFINITION	LEARNING OUTCOMES
Language and culture	All general or language-specific linguistic, sociolinguistic, cultural, and transcultural knowledge and skills that constitute the basis of advanced translation competence	1-14
Technology	The knowledge and skills used to implement present and future translation technologies within the translation process - this category also includes basic knowledge of machine translation technologies and the ability to implement machine translation according to potential needs	15-20
Personal and interpersonal	All the generic skills, often referred to as "soft skills", that enhance graduate adaptability and employability	21-26
Service provision	All the skills relating to the implementation of translation and, more generally, to language services in a professional context – from client awareness and negotiation through to project management and quality assurance	27-35

4.3 Discussion on Kelly's (2005) translator competence framework

The comparison of the three translator competence frameworks referred to in this chapter shows that researchers and trainers have found translation competence to be a useful concept. The concept may be used as the basis of curriculum design or engagement with more theoretical concerns such as translatability. The model may help trainers or students themselves to distinguish an individual's degree of translation competence in the novice-expert continuum. However, some differences exist between these competence frameworks in terms of the way in which the translator competence is defined. Kelly (2005) considers that translation

competence is macro competence can be broken into several sub-competencies that are all required for the translation success. This list of the sub-competencies given by Kelly (2005) is specified to be not exhaustive, indicating the possibility that these competencies may overlap as the author has indicated a level of uncertainty of the components and their interrelation (Acioly-Régnier et al., 2015). There is no hierarchical relation between the competences which means acquiring one skill does not necessarily lead to achieving another one in a systematic order. However, their interdependence indicates a mastery of a macro translation competence. Although Kelly's framework identifies psycho-physiological competence and social competence, Haru Deliana Dewi (2019) does not specify these as competences, arguing that they are overlapped with other competences. The potential of overlapping means the thirteen competences of Kelly's framework are sufficient to identify professional future translators (Dewi, 2019).

In contrast, the EMT framework (see Table 4.2) includes various levels of each competence area which are in some cases, divided into dimensions and then into components (see Section 4.2.3). So, it is unclear whether these competences overlap due to their complexity of details in each competence analysis and the difficulty of applying it in real-life contexts (see Section 4.2.3). Overlapping indicates the extent of the similarity among the translator competences, so it is a positive sign as it means a novice translator requires fewer competences (Acioly-Régnier, 2015).

Knowing how competences overlap is important for this research, for example, in checking for any overlapping during data analysis of graduate responses regarding what skills and translator competences they possess. The translation competences given by Greere and Tataru (2008) specify the structure of the translation process starting from organisational competence to documentation competence; however, again, no subcompetences are defined, and there is a lack of explicit specification. The list of translation competences by Greere and Tataru (2008) is also not exhaustive.

Kelly's (2005) framework differs from that of other translation competence frameworks through the perception that translation competence is complex requiring the presence of several subcompetences. Despite the existence of overlapping among the subcompetences, Kelly (2005) has differentiated between the cultural and the thematic subcompetences instead of differentiating between the translation knowledge and the strategic subcompetences. Another unique feature of the translation competence as mentioned by Kelly (2005) is the explicit specification that interpersonal sub-competence is highly required for the purpose of the professional practices, which is mentioned as two different competences for the translation by Greere and Tataru (2008). This necessity of the interpersonal sub-competence is because of its ability in making the translator interact with the other clients, translators or professionals.

4.4 Acknowledging missing literature and Justification of Kelly's (2005) framework

The analysis of the different models and frameworks related to translator competence illustrates that there is no universally accepted model of translation competence in the academic environment, although there have been projects that have attempted to create, test, evaluate and refine the effectiveness of some models such as PACTE and EMT competence models. The competence frameworks discussed in Section 4.3 indicate that the subcompetences in Kelly's (2005) have a high probability of overlapping significantly. However, if the teacher/school decides in favour of a particular model, it is important to implement it consistently in developing the curriculum and using it in translation classes. The benefits of these concepts are not restricted to the implementation of TC models into translation programmes and the evaluation of TTs. However, an ideal translation competence model is required to meet some specific requirements listed below,

(1) The model should predominantly serve to make the student aware of the stage (or development) of his/her competence/s.

(2) Since TC development is an open-ended process, and there is no finite goal to arrive at (even the expert is still learning), the trainee must become not only competent *enough*, but also an expert on the particular configuration of competences that manifest in his/her work generally and in a given text-in-situation in particular.

(3) Employing a TC model within translation training should serve to make the trainee aware of his/her particular strengths or weaknesses and provide

him/her with the means to develop these strengths and mitigate the weaknesses.

Stanislava Šeböková (2010: 50) argues that, for a translation model to be truly useful in a classroom or training context, it must be

(a) general enough to be applicable to many different contexts, text types or languages and

(b) specific enough to allow both trainers and trainees to use it to identify different sub-competences within the supercompetence or macrocompetence.

Considering the above-mentioned requirements that a TC model should satisfy, Kelly's model of translator competence is identified as the one meeting all these requirements. For instance, training needs' analysis of Kelly's competence model enables the translator trainees to be aware of their needs based on their strengths and weakness (Beeby et al., 2008). This awareness greatly helps the trainees to overcome their weakness when the training curriculum is designed to address the needs of the trainees. Moreover, the discussion of Kelly's (2005) translation competence framework in relation with the other frameworks showed the uniqueness of Kelly's framework. This uniqueness lies in the explicit specification that the subcompetences are not exhaustive indicating the chance of overlapping. In comparison, there is not such overlapping in the EMT model as discussed in Section 4.2.3 due to the distinct categories and the detailed analysis of each competence area. As a result, the competence model of Kelly is chosen as the main competence model to carry out the critical discussion of the findings of this

research. At the same time, some of the limitations of the EMT model identified from the analysis made in the previous section have resulted in not considering this framework for the discussion of these research findings.

In the same way, the translation standards like the European quality standard for translation services EN15038: 2006 mainly covers the translation service including the translator, reviser and reviewer and focuses on translation as a product. However, the updated standard of ISO17100: 2015 focuses on the process of the translation including the client's needs and the presence of a project manager to ensure the translation quality and delivery of the service. Despite the similarities and differences between the old standard of EN15038 which was exclusively a European Standard and the upgraded standard of ISO17100, neither has been designed for educational objectives nor directly adapted to education.

Gabr's curriculum development model (Gabr, 2001) is another paradigm often referred to in research literature (see Section 2.4) that is not used for data analysis and discussion of the findings here. The reason for not adopting Gabr's (2001) model (see Figure 2.2) in the data analysis of this research is justified in two criticisms. The first is that the model lacks assessment of the market needs in the primary stage of curriculum development and is not applicable in practice (Kearns, 2006).

It does not provide applicable explicit curriculum guidelines for the teacher and it also rejects the necessity of the implementation of the vocational needs at the primary stages, which does not agree with the aim of this research as it focuses on developing the translation curriculum according to students' and the job market requirements. Therefore, it is not suitable to adapt Gabr's model to the curriculum development for Saudi students studying translation courses as per the student needs to meet the Saudi Vision 2030 which emphasises on aligning the outcomes of the Saudi higher education system with market needs (see Section 1.2.2).

Secondly, Gabr's model is highly syllabus centred, as it follows instructional objectives. He considered them to be useful, because they "tell the teacher where the course is going and how to know when he has gotten there" (Harris and DeSimone 1994, 126). This illustrates the idea of the relationship between fulfilling the course objectives and the teachers and what they teach, rather than the students and their acquired knowledge or competences that have been obtained. Therefore, this model is not suitable for this research as it contradicts the vocational objectives of this research.

The European Master's in Translation (EMT) framework is a reference framework available for designing the training programmes within translation (EMT Expert Group, 2009). The EMT framework, interchangeably referred to as the EMT competence model (see Table 4.2), is a combination of several competences

including language and culture, technology, personal and interpersonal, and service provision competences which are equally important. The main intention behind launching the EMT project lies in providing the following:

1. A generic description of the competencies and tasks of translators that aligns with translation industry needs and the needs of public bodies like European Union institutions.
2. A draft related to the European model curriculum that helps to outline the requirements of and further improve the translation profession status and quality (Chodkiewicz, 2012).

This EMT framework is one of the significant contributions made in the translation industry as this framework has been compiled based on the request made by the European Union which is a key stakeholder and employer present in the translation industry in Europe. As a result, applying the EMT framework to the translation programmes is a prerequisite for various universities in the European countries (Scarpa and Orlando, 2017). The EMT expert group is one of those which was involved in developing the EMT framework, consisting of specialists from different universities for the purpose of improving the curriculum, who were able to create two key documents.

1. The first one is related to list of competencies which must be acquired by ending of training program that is EMT eligible.

2. Outlining selection criteria of students for admittance into university programs existing within the EMT network (Chodkiewicz, 2012).

This EMT framework consists of six interdependent competencies related to various professional fields, such as multilingual and multimedia communication and different modes of interpretation and translation. According to the EMT framework, competence refers to a combination of different aptitudes, behaviours, know-how and knowledge needed for carrying out translation tasks within the given conditions (2009). From this analysis of background details of the EMT framework, it is found that the EMT framework is strongly related to the context of the master's degree in translation and its acquired skills within the European context which are different from the skills of the undergraduate's degree within another research context. Therefore, it mainly focuses on the 'competence of translation services, which plays a key role in the translator's task from the client's point of view', and this is not currently the case in this research (Neubert 2000: 10).

Nazanene Esfandiari et al. (2019) have claimed that 'feedback and input from the translation market and industry are not emphasized, and its components are in fact the minimum requirement' (Gambier, 2009 cited in Esfandiari, et al (2019)). They also acknowledged that the compatibility of these competences with the professional translators' needs is not determined (Esfandiari et al, 2019). Therefore, they have carried out a study to evaluate the effectiveness of the EMT framework in

being compatible with the needs of the professional translators in the market by collecting data directly from 456 people. In the same way, evaluation of a translation competence model based on the EMT framework (Scarpa and Orlando, 2017) also showed that only some competences of this framework are compatible with the translator industry needs. They used the EMT framework to define 'the general translation competences assumed to be already acquired by translators wishing to specialise in legal translation' (Scarpa and Orlando, 2017: 27). They presented 'a model for the conceptualisation of legal translation competence' which are relevant to legal translators as an extension to the developed EMT framework (Scarpa and Orlando, 2017).

Based on these two studies, the EMT framework is also found to have some limitations due to the detailed grid of competences and sub- competences. However, in the case of Kelly's (2005) translation competence framework, the unique feature in terms of the subcompetences not being exhaustive helps in incorporating new competences based on the changing needs of the translator market.

4.5 Analysis of Sample of Saudi BA courses

The total number of Saudi state universities is thirty-three universities across the country. However, only twenty universities are offering EFL courses and twelve of

those, which are the focus of this research, are offering translation modules either as a whole department, a separate lane (TS) or just as modules implemented within EFL course. This research incorporates both types of courses taught within these universities.

4.5.1 Difference between EFL and TS Course

Although the universities chosen for this research offer EFL/TS courses, they possess different objectives. The main difference between EFL and TS courses is that the EFL courses in the Saudi universities tend to focus mainly on all the four language learning skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. However, not all EFL courses have TS components. This research only considers universities with EFL courses offering translation module/s. TS courses, on the other hand, mainly focus on different aspects of theory, practice, translation methods and tools and are taught as modules integral to EFL courses or as a separate department or lane.

There is a similarity between the EFL with translation component/s and TS courses, that is, they both emphasize the elements of translation as one of the learning strategies for students as well as the influence of the culture and religion on learning a foreign language and on translation. Based on the available information from the course information available in each university website, the objectives of EFL and TS courses are differentiated below.

Table 4.4: Objectives of EFL and TS courses

ID	Objectives of EFL course	Objectives of TS course
EU	The program in English is designed to provide students with a high level of communication skills, a scientific knowledge of the English language and the capacity for appreciating and analysing literature. It also endows the learner with various skills essential for teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL).	The program in Translation is designed to provide students with a high level of communication skills, a thorough training in translation, and the capacity for appreciating and analysing literature. To achieve its goals, the program offers a variety of courses in language, translation and literature.
IMAMU	Encouraging research in literary, linguistics and arranging for training courses and scientific meeting.	Providing functional and practical advice in the field of English language teaching and translation.
KAU	Teaching English and French by focusing on the skills of listening and speaking, reading and writing; Familiarizing learners with different branches of Western Literature and cultivating analytical and critical abilities; Presenting the theories and hypotheses of Linguistics and furthering the abilities of analysis, comparison, and application;	Teaching of translation and of mastering its different fields Teaching learners to develop themselves, to influence their social environment, and to communicate with individuals of other cultures and civilizations while keeping a sense of personal pride and trust in themselves, in their cultural principles, and in their ethnic identity.
KKU		**Translation 1: Course objectives** 1. To give students practice in general translation at the intermediate level; 2. To enhance students' ability to translate material involving some 3. linguistic and/or cultural problems for Arab EFL learners 4. To promote the students' ability in solving such problems through (a) providing them with lucid, practical guidelines for tackling the problems;

		5. and (b) training the students in devising appropriate strategies for coping with problems of a similar nature which they are apt to encounter in the process of English/Arabic or Arabic/English translation **Translation 2: Course objectives** 1. To give students practice in translating religious terminology and texts; 2. To highlight the differences between Arabic religious discourse and English discourse; 3. To sensitize students to linguistic types and/or styles that are characteristic of the Islamic genre of translation; 4. To introduce terms/concepts that are specific to Islam but are alien to the English language
KSU	To provide theoretical and practical knowledge in the fields of English and fill the needs of the labour market with specialists.	To encourage research and investigation in English translation.
PNU	Achieving cultural communication and dialogue with the world through language teaching, cultural exchange, and participation in international seminars and conferences. Exchanging experiences and information and establishing partnerships with regional and	Fulfilling community needs for specialists in the field of languages and translation. Encouraging the translation from and into the Arabic language and contributing to the transfer of sciences and localized technology.
	international educational and cultural institutions.	
UQU		1. Giving students the main issues, principles and methods of translation and analysing the differences between Arabic and English Sentence structure.

		2. Introducing translation theories and application and finding solutions while translating.
JU	No information	No information
TU	1. To boost students' 4 skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking 2. To cultivate their literary appreciation and critical-analytical ability 3. To enhance their understanding of rhetoric and pragmatics 4. To deepen their knowledge of the various branches of modern linguistic theory	1. To train them in the principles and mechanisms of translation

Contextualising the differences and the similarities identified in relation to EFL and TS courses in the context of this research indicates that there are also differences in considering the market needs. For example, TS courses' objectives mainly consider the practical skills and the competences of the students, as specialists, when they graduate. However, EFL courses consider general objectives related to teaching English. Thus, to some extent, both courses consider the market needs as well as developing linguistics skills especially in English.

Table 4.5: Saudi Universities (state and public sectors)

NO.	NAME	LOCATION (CITY AND REGION)	EFL	T	LOCATION OF EFL/TRANSLATION COURSE
1	Al-Baha University	Al-Baha (Southern)			College[1] of Arts and Humanities/English Language Department
2	Al-Faisal University (Private)	Riyadh (Central)			
3	Al-Jouf University	Skaka (Northern)			College of Administrative Sciences and Humanities/English Language Department.
4	Al-Majmaah University	Al-Majmaah (Central)			College of Administrative Sciences and Humanities/College of Education
5	Al-Yamamah University (Private)	Riyadh (Central)			
6	Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University	Dammam (Eastern)			College of Arts and Humanities/English Language department
7	Dar al Uloom University (Private)	Riyadh (Central)			College of Education/English Department.
8	Effat University (Private)	Jeddah (Western)			College of Humanities and Social Sciences/English Language and Translation.
9	Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University	Riyadh (Central)			College of Languages and Translation
10	Islamic University	Madinah (Western)			
11	Jazan University	Jazan (Southern)			College of Arts and Humanities/English Language Department
12	Jeddah University	Jeddah (Western)			College of Sciences and Arts/ Department of English Language and Translation.
13	King Abdul Aziz University	Jeddah (Western)			College of Arts and Humanities/Department of European Languages and Literature

14	King Abdullah University of Science and Technology	Thuwal (Western)			
15	King Fahad University of Petroleum minerals.	Al Dammam (Eastern)			
16	King Faisal University	Al-Ahsa (Eastern)			College of Arts/English Language
17	King Khalid University	Abha (Southern)			College of Languages and Translation
18	King Saud University	Riyadh (Central)			College of Languages and Translation/English Language and Translation Department
19	King Saud University for Health Sciences	Jeddah (Western)& Riyadh(Central)			
20	Najran University	Najran (Southern)			College of Arts and Sciences/English Language Department
21	Northern Borders University	Arar (Northern)			
22	Prince Mohammed bin Fahad University (Private)	Al-Khubar			
23	Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University	Al-Kharj (Central)			College of Arts and Sciences/English Language and Literature
24	Prince Sultan University (Private)	Jeddah (Western)			
25	Princess Nourah University	Riyadh (Central)			College of Arts/English Language and Translation
26	Qassim University	Al-Qassim (Northern)			College of Arabic Language and Social Studies/English Language and Translation.
27	Saudi Electronic University	Riyadh (Central)			College of Science and Theoretical Studies/ Department of English and Translation

28	Shaqra University	Shaqra (Central)			College of Education and College of Arts and Sciences
29	Taibah University	Al-Madinah (Western)			
30	Taif University	Taif (Western)			Department of Foreign Languages
31	Umm Al-Qura University	Makkah (Western)			College of Social Sciences/Department of English Language
32	University of Hail	Hail (North Central)			College of Arts/English Language Department
33	University of Tabuk	Tabuk (North-Western)			

EFL = English as Foreign Language T = Translation
[1] In Saudi Arabia, the term 'College' is used to designate what would normally be called a School or Faculty in the UK. These are composed of various departments.

(Table 4.5) shows that only twenty universities offer English as a foreign language course (EFL) where students study one or two levels of an introduction to translation module. Only twelve universities such as Effat University (Private), Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Jeddah University, Princess Nora University, King Khalid University and King Saud University offer a specialised translation lane (see Section 4.3.2).

4.5.2 An overview of the Saudi universities that were involved in the study

This section provides the overall context of Saudi universities that were chosen for this study. The justification behind the choice of these twelve universities is because they offer translation modules either as autonomous of, or as integral to, EFL courses. This research incorporates both types of courses which are EFL and TS.

However, in terms of representativeness, the data received for this research was from staff in six universities, students from twelve different universities and graduates from eight universities. However, there is no link between the data received and the number of universities for each respondent group. The data received from staff, students and graduates was collected through online links either by email or distributed through social media platforms. Therefore, the number of responses and their selection from each university is variable (see Section 9.2).

Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (AIU): Commonly referred to as Al Imam University, this university was initially founded in 1953 as a college and granted university status in 1974. The university promotes translating and publishing as it has its own printing press that opened in 1990. A translation programme was established in the Arabic Department in 1981, which was approved as an independent college by the Ministry of Higher Education in 2001. The MA in Translation began in 2005. To gain admission, students must successfully pass an intensive one-semester course consisting of 25 hours a week.

Jeddah University (JU): JU is the most recently founded Saudi University when King Abdullah was on the throne and was established in 2014-2015. The university started with an English language college that has an optional translation lane, where more field specific modules are taught. In February 2019, by the decision of his Excellency the Rector, the English department in KAU (where data collection was

performed and my place of work) transferred to Jeddah University. The new department is currently called the College of Languages and Translation, which will include four departments, namely English, Arabic, Translation, and International Languages. The new college aims to prepare a leading generation that meets the 2030 vision, the needs of the society, and its future aspirations through quality programmes in the field of languages, translation, scientific research, and cultural communication.

King Abdulaziz University (KAU): KAU was initially established in 1967 as a private university by a business consortium. In 1974, the university became a publicly funded institution. The Department of English Language was established in 1969 and later renamed the Department of European Languages and Literature in 1983. The school offers BA, MA, and PhD degrees and is currently developing the curriculum for a BA in Translation to train professional translators and interpreters to meet the increasing demand. Graduates from the department work in tourism, civil aviation, museums and art galleries, finance and banking, the oil industry, embassies and academia, and as EFL teachers, editors, media correspondents, reporters, and translators. There is also an English Language Institute that teaches general English courses to students from other departments, as well as an Arabic Language Institute for non-Arabic speakers. This research was conducted at this university, which has three different branches.

King Khalid University (KKU): King Saud University and Al-Imam University, each of which had a branch in Abha, were merged in 1998 into a single new institution, King Khalid University. However, translation teaching took place in the established college of translation in 1994 before their merger.

King Saud University (KSU): The first and largest Saudi university was founded by King Saud bin Abdulaziz as Riyadh University in 1957 and renamed in his honour in 1982. This university was the first in Saudi Arabia, established in 1957, with the English Language and Translation Department being founded in 1994. The school offers BA, MA and PhD programmes.

Princess Nourah bint Abdul Rahman University (PNU): This institution opened in 1970 as the first College of Education for women in the Kingdom. In 2004, six of the original colleges in the city were merged to create Riyadh University for Women, the first all-women's university in Saudi Arabia and the world's biggest women-only university. In 2008, King Abdullah inaugurated a new campus and changed the university's name to Princess Nora bint Abdul Rahman University.[18] The English Language and Translation Department is one of the most recent departments at PNU. The college began activities at the beginning of the academic year 2007/2008, offering BA and postgraduate studies.

[18] The decision to name the university after a woman was unusual in the Saudi context, where traditionally the given names of females, even close family members, were never spoken in public (Boullata, 1989). The King's decision was considered by some to be a symbolic gesture indicating the need for greater visibility of women in Saudi society.

Taif University (TU): In 2003, the numbers of the applicants had increased while Saudi Arabia was pursuing a policy that would expand the HE opportunities outside ~~of~~ the main cities. As such, Taif University was established, and efforts began to expand the new university's range of specialisations offering BA and MA. Translation is taught as a module within the English department.

Umm Al-Qura University (UQU): Umm Al-Qura University was originally the Shariah College in Makkah in 1949, making it the first higher educational institution in Saudi Arabia. This college was brought under the aegis of KAU in 1971, until Umm Al-Qura University was established in 1979. The Department of Languages was founded in 1983 and currently offers BA English Language and Literature and MA Translation.

4.5.3 Rationale for choosing Jeddah University as an application of Kelly's Framework

Kelly's competency model is based on seven competencies mapped against areas in a curriculum that develop each of them (see Table 4.6). The model is mainly used for curriculum design, but several studies including this thesis and the study by Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) extrapolate from it the means of analysing competencies embedded in existing curricula. This thesis, by extension, uses Kelly's framework (see Table 4.6) to analyse the Jeddah University translation course as a sample of a Saudi undergraduate EFL/TS course (see Table 4.7) to allow for the results of this

analysis to be compared later (see Chapter 8) with those obtained by Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) in a study of the MENA region (see Tables 4.8 and 4.9).

Table 4.6: Framework for course analysis based on Kelly (2005)

TRANSLATION COMPETENCE	CURRICULUM AREA DEVELOPED
Communicative and textual competence (language skills)	• Written and oral communicative skills modules in SL and TL • Linguistics • Text analysis • Grammar • Semantics • Syntax • Discourse analysis • Theory of communication
Cultural and intercultural competence (extra-linguistic skills)	• Courses relating to source and target language cultures • Translation theory
Subject-area competence	• Courses that develop familiarity with domain specific content (e.g. law or economics modules) • Field-specific translation modules
Professional and instrumental competence (research and technology)	• Research skills/documentation • Knowledge of IT tools • Knowledge of management concepts • Computer literacy modules • CAT/MT tools • Terminology • Audio-visual translation
Strategic competence*	• Planning • Assessment • Troubleshooting translation issues • Translation practice/placement • Quality assurance
Interpersonal competence	• Teamwork
Attitudinal or psychological competence	• Not likely to be named component of module/course but rather embedded in content. May be fostered by immersion in other cultures and/or exposure to translation practice on placement/internship

* Some of these skills are more likely to feature on postgraduate courses.

Due to the study's limitations, Kelly's framework is applied on only one course, namely the undergraduate course at the department of the European languages and translation at JU, Saudi Arabia. JU is chosen as the most recent and developing university in the country that has a new plan for change to fulfil the needs of the new national Saudi Vision 2030. The university has responded and conformed to the increasing demand for professional translators in the region and future needs by preparing graduates more professionally. Translation is currently taught as a separate lane within the course offered. However, the reason for choosing to analyse this course is because the department is undergoing transformation to a larger college of languages and translation by 2020, while merging it with a branch of KAU (where data collection was conducted). The current course taught since the university has been established, is going to be analysed below with Kelly's competence framework. This has been done by analysing the modules titles included in the course plan and their descriptions (see Appendix 11) based on Kelly's (2005) competence categorisation (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Analysis of Saudi courses (JU) using Kelly's framework

TRANSLATION COMPETENCE	CURRICULUM AREA DEVELOPED
Communicative and textual competence (language skills)	• Written and oral communicative skills modules in SL and TL (e.g. general English, writing, reading, listening and speaking etc.) • Linguistics (e.g. linguistics skills in Arabic, Introduction to linguistics in English) • Text analysis (e.g. written editing in Arabic, texts translation) • Theory of communication (e.g. communication skills)
Cultural and intercultural competence (extra-linguistic skills)	• Courses relating to source and target language cultures (Islamic culture, practical training in translation, cultural exchange in translation) • Translation theory (translation theory module)
Subject-area competence	• Courses that develop familiarity with domain specific content (media, commercial, and legal translation)
Professional and instrumental competence (research and technology)	• Research skills/documentation (e.g., research methods in translation) • Knowledge of IT tools (e.g. computer applications in translation) • CAT/MT tools • Terminology
Strategic competence*	• Troubleshooting translation problems • Translation practice/placement (practical training)
Interpersonal competence	Teamwork

Attitudinal or psychological competence	• More likely to be embedded in content rather than named as a component of module/course • May be fostered by immersion in other cultures and/or exposure to translation practice on placement/internship

* Some of these skills are more likely to feature on postgraduate courses.

Table 4.7 explains examples of how competences were detected from the module title and its description by analysing the course content and then categorising it according to Kelly's competences categorisation. For example, Language skills modules competence areas such as writing, reading, listening and speaking, linguistic skills in Arabic and communication skills were easy to detect as communicative and textual competence.

This competence modelling analysis define the "translator qualification profile", "determine the core of translation practice", and "inform curriculum development as it attempts to respond to societal needs" (Al-Batineh and Bilali, 2017: 191). These actions are necessary if this new developing university plans to build a strong foundation to rely on at this stage; the analysis will provide "a better understanding of the current translation market expectations" (Al-Batineh and Bilali, 2017: 198). The analysis will also assess and give a clearer picture of the current provision. Therefore, in order to emphasise competences' development which are required in the market and to plan the content of the course, there is a great need to implement any changes to fulfil those skills. These changes will avoid any

deficiencies from the beginning, and professionally preparing the graduates with the required competences in translation job market. They will result in improved employability rates, better future anticipation, and enhanced validity and viability for the translation course.

Similarly, based on Kelly's framework (2005), Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) analysed the translation competences and skills required for the MENA through investigating job descriptions in the region that were advertised on Arab job portals (see Section 2.6). The analysis of the number of the skills required according to their frequent occurrence in the job advertisements indicate the market needs and what these translators are required to do (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) mapping of skills required for the MENA based on frequency in job advertisements

TRANSLATION COMPETENCE	**TRANSLATION SKILLS REQUIRED FOR MENA REGION MARKET**
Communicative and textual competence (language skills)	• Language skills • Communication skills • Creative writing skills
Cultural and intercultural competence (extra-linguistic skills)	• Cultural knowledge
Subject-area competence	• Experience in localisation • Subject-field specific experience
Professional and instrumental competence (research and technology)	• Experience in translation and • Localisation • CAT tools experience • Experience in project management

	• Subtitling experience • Experience with machine translation • Experience in DTP • Computer skills
Strategic competence*	• Experience in QA • Organisational skills • Analytical and problem-solving skills
Interpersonal competence	• The ability to communicate effectively and to be a team player
Attitudinal or psychological competence	• Not mentioned

The other set of data used in Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) is based on the analysis of the titles of 221 online collected BA translation courses across the MENA region through investigating their titles to detect the competences offered (see Table 4.9). Limitations of this analysis are discussed earlier (see Section 2.6).

In the following tables (4.9, 4.10) Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) analysis results of the required skills in the job market (Table 4.8) will be compared to; the titles analysis of 221 course across MENA; JU translation course analyses through examining not only the modules' titles but also their descriptions to identify the indicated competences (see Section 8.6).

Table 4.9: Analysis of BA training curricula vs. job descriptions (JD) using Kelly's competence model (2005) for MENA sample (Source: Al-Batineh and Bilali, 2017:197) and Saudi sample

Competences	**MENA BA courses**	**% MENA BA courses**	**Saudi BA (JU) courses**	**% Saudi BA courses**	**JD mentions**	**% JD mentions**
Communicative & textual	123	56%	27	62.7%	20	18%
Cultural & intercultural	15	7%	4	9.3%	3	3%
Subject area	45	20%	7	16.28%	15	13%
Professional & instrumental	23	10%	4	9.3%	56	50%
Strategic	15	7%	1	2.32%	6	5%
Interpersonal	---	---	---	---	12	11%
Attitudinal/psycho-physiological	---	---	---	---	---	---
Total	**221**	**100%**	**43**	**100%**	**112**	**100%**

*No courses could be associated with the last two competences in the model.

The formula used to calculate % competences in MENA BA courses is: in Equation (1), the 'Total number of MENA BA courses' is 221

$\sum_i^n i \ = 1 + 2 + 3 + \cdots + n$ (1)

The competences mentioned in MENA courses= 123+ 15+ 45+ 23+ 15+0 +0 (1)

Percentage = $\frac{n}{\sum n} \times 100$

e.g., 56%= 123/221 X 100

In the same way, the % Saudi BA courses is calculated as,

In Equation (2), 'Total number of JU BA courses' is 43.

$\sum_i^n i \ = 1 + 2 + 3 + \cdots + n$ (2)

The number of competences mentioned in JU courses= 27+4+ 7+ 4+ 1+0+0 (2)

Percentage = $\frac{n}{\sum n} \times 100$

e.g., 62.7%= 27/43 X 100

Similarly, the calculation of % JD mentions is done using the formula,

In Equation (3), total number of JD mentions is 112.

$\sum_i^n i \ = 1 + 2 + 3 + \cdots + n$ (3)

The total number of JD mentions= 20+3+ 15+ 56+ 6+12 (3)

Percentage = $\frac{n}{\sum n} \times 100$

e.g, 18%= 20/122 X 100

Table 4.9 illustrates that in the MENA region, there is a focus on communicative and textual competence, which is explained by "the necessity for students to develop strong bilingual skills at an early stage of training" to perform a translation task. It is mentioned 123 times (%56) of the total number of competences. However, this competence occupies a small percentage of the job requirement as it is expected that any translation graduate must master it (20 mentions, forming 18% of the total number). Similarly, in JU, the total of 43 modules analysis shows that it mainly focusses on communicative and textual competence (62.7%) as it is offered in 27 courses while it is not highly illustrated in the job market.

However, as this research focuses on JU, more examples will be given. There is a significant gap (16.28%) is present between the next covered subject area competence, which is defined by Kelly (2005: 77) as the introductory modules that provide students "with sufficient basic knowledge to understand the major concepts in specialised texts". The least frequent competences are cultural and intercultural (9.3%), which deal with any cultural aspects "beyond language proper"; "professional and instrumental competence" (9.3%), which is defined as the "ability to use translation tools and conduct research" and considered essential in meeting the demands of the market; and strategic competence (2.3%), which is "concerned with planning, transfer, assessment and troubleshooting of any translation problems" (Kelly, 2005: 194, 193-194).

The course provides more introductory and general modules than a translation specialised course. There is also a significant gap between the competences of the course offered and job market requirements (see Section 8.5.1). As an example, Table 4.9 illustrates that most of the modules offered fall under the communicative and textual competence (62.7%). On the other hand, professional and instrumental competence are demanded in the translation market (50%), but the reflecting percentage offered from the JU course is significantly lower (9.3%) (see Section 8.6 for discussion). The next table 4.10 compares the analysis of the field specific translation modules in MENA and JU courses in comparison to the analysis of JD requirement.

Table 4.10: Breakdown of field-specific content of BA translation modules vs. specialist fields mentioned in the corpus of job descriptions (JD) for MENA (Source: Al-Batineh and Bilali, 2017:197) and Saudi sample JU

Field-specific translation modules	**MENA BA courses**	**% MENA BA courses**	**Saudi BA (JU) courses**	**% Saudi BA (JU) courses**	**JD mentions**	**% JD mentions**
Financial	7	21%	-	-	7	18%
Legal	10	29%	2	40%	9	23%
Literary	3	9%	1	20%	1	3%
Media	4	12%	2	40%	2	5%
Medical	4	12%	-	-	8	21%
Religious	1	3%	-	-	---	---
Technical	5	15%	-	-	12	31%
Total	**34**	**100%**	**5**	**100%**	**39**	**100%**

Based on the BA course titles analysis, there are only 34 courses out of the total of 122 in MENA that include different translation fields such as legal (29%, *n*=10), financial (21%, *n*=7). However, JU has only 5 specialised translation modules in its course, they focus on media translation, legal and commercial modules, each of which represents (40%, *n*=2*)* and Literary translation (20%, *n=1).*

Similarly, calculation of the percentages as part of the analysis is done using the following formulae,

In Table 4.10, the formula used to calculate % MENA BA courses is: in Equation (4), the 'Total number field specific courses in MENA' is 34

$\sum_i^n i \ = 1 + 2 + 3 + \cdots + n$ (4)

7+ 10+ 3+ 4+ 4+ 1+ 5= 34 (4)

Percentage = $\frac{n}{\sum n} \times 100$

e.g, there are 7 financial modules

21%= 7/34 X 100

In the same way, the % JU specialised courses is calculated as,

In Equation (5), 'the total number field specific modules in JU' is 5

$\sum_i^n i = 1 + 2 + 3 + \cdots + n$ (5)

2+1+2= 5 (5)

Percentage = $\frac{n}{\sum n} \times 100$

e.g, there are 2 legal modules 40% = 2/5 X100

Similarly, the calculation of % specialised translation in JD is done using the formula,

In Equation (6), total number of specialised modules in JD mentions is 39

$\sum_i^n i = 1 + 2 + 3 + \cdots + n$ (6)

7+ 9+ 1+ 2+ 8+ 0+ 12= 39 (6)

Percentage = $\frac{n}{\sum n} \times 100$

e.g, financial translation was mentioned 7 times out of the total number

18% = 7/ 39X 100

However, based on the data analysed by Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017: 197), "technical, legal, medical, and financial areas of specialisation are the area of greatest need in term of translation subject-matter expertise", and should be "linked to the socioeconomic realities" of the region. Therefore, there is no alignment

between the competences offered by the translation course at JU and the developing market's expectations or demands. This finding is enhanced by the other stakeholders' views (see Chapter 8)

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the frameworks and approaches to translation training, like Kelly's (2005) analysis of translator competence, the European Master's in Translation (EMT) model and that of Greere and Tătaru (2008). JU translation course has been analysed using Kelly's competence framework. The results of this analysis are compared to those obtained by Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) in an analysis of the translation market in the MENA region by examining job descriptions.

In the Saudi sample (JU) analysed, there is a significant focus on theory-oriented modules rather than the practice-oriented modules, which are more useful for the market demands and preparing students for translation industry. There is also disparity in the competences offered by the JU translation course and those required in the job market, particularly among those that provide graduates with translation proficiency and real-world experience. A detailed discussion is followed in Chapter 8.

5. Analysis of Staff Questionnaires

This chapter presents the results of the questionnaire that was used to survey the opinions of a sample of staff teaching EFL/ TS at the Saudi universities shown in Table 5.1 (see Appendix 8).

Table 5.1: Universities with respondents to staff questionnaire

	Identifier	**Funding**	**Location**
King Abdulaziz University	KAU	Public	Western Province
King Saud University	KSU	Public	Central Province
King Abdulaziz University (Rabigh Campus)	KAR[19]	Public	Western Province
Princess Nora University	PNU	Public	Central Province
Qassim University	QU	Public	Central Province
Taif University	TU	Public	Western Province

This staff questionnaire was mainly focused on KAU staff. The data collected from the non-KAU staff were solely used for comparison purposes during the analysis, but comparison of the data from both KAU and non-KAU staff did prove useful. The main aims of the staff questionnaire were as follows:

- To establish what the staff perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of the current provision.

[19] The provision at Rabigh campus differs from that offered to students at the main KAU campus, so it is considered here to be a separate entity.

- To gauge the staff's attitudes towards introducing changes in the way translation is currently taught in order to reflect more student-centred approaches to language learning.
- To gauge staff's attitudes towards increasing the vocational orientation of translation courses and thereby increase the employability of graduates as professional linguists.

One of the objectives of this study is to establish an evidence-based foundation for improving the delivery and outcomes of translation courses and thereby producing graduates who are better prepared to cope with the needs of the Saudi translation market. This objective is accomplished by identifying the current strengths and weaknesses in existing provision. This foundation is used in Chapter 9 to produce a set of recommendations based on the results of the staff and student questionnaires. The longer-term aim of this research is to trial a revised translation course based on these recommendations within a specific university setting (KAU) in order to allow the course's effectiveness to be evaluated. To achieve this longer-term goal, the KAU questionnaires and those completed by staff from other Saudi universities have therefore been analysed separately to gain a clear view of any distinctive features of KAU provision.

The results are presented in this chapter following the order of the questionnaire sections. Analysis of the quantitative data collected from the questionnaire is done using discrete statistics, in which the percentage of responses is calculated. The formula that is used to calculate the average and applicable for all the questions in

student, graduate and employer (see Chapters 6 and 7) questionnaires is in Equation (7).

The sum of the numbers divided by the total number of values in the set
(7)

$$\text{Average} = \frac{a1+a2+a3+\cdots+an}{n} \quad (7)$$

This formula given in Equation (7) is similar to the formula to calculate the average for each multiple-choice option of the questions in the questionnaire.

The first of these sections focused on staff qualifications and experience, so the responses provide some insights into the profile of the sample of respondents; these insights in turn allow for an evaluation of the sample's representativeness. In the second questionnaire section, items related specifically to aspects of the respective translation programmes in the departments represented. Finally, the questionnaire concluded with a series of items designed to elicit information about methods of teaching and assessment in translation modules. Responses to these latter two sections are used to evaluate the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the current provision across the institutions surveyed, with a specific focus on content and methods of delivery and on assessing the current provision's degree of vocational orientation.

Section 5.1 looks at the academic qualifications and teaching experience of the respondents.

5.1 Staff Qualifications and Experience

The sample of staff respondents represented a total of six Saudi universities where some form of translation is taught. Although staff from Jeddah University, Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (Riyadh), and King Khalid University (Asir Province) were also contacted, no responses were received from these institutions by the deadline for inclusion in this study. A total of 20 completed questionnaires were received, five of which had been completed by KAU staff. The largest group of respondents from the same university, namely the Rabigh Campus of KAU, consisted of seven respondents.

Table 5.2: Staff university information

Respondent's place of employment	**No. of respondents**	**Respondent Identifiers**
King Abdulaziz University	5	KAU1-KAU5
King Saud University	5	KSU1-KSU5
King Abdulaziz University (Rabigh Campus)	7	KAR1-KAR7
Princess Nora University	1	PNU1
Qassim University	1	QU1
Taif University	1	TU1

Respondents were asked to state their highest educational qualification; the results for both KAU and the other universities are presented in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Staff qualifications

KAU	**No.**	**Other Universities**	**No.**
BA	N/A	BA	4
MA	3	MA	9
PhD	2	PhD	2

As Table 5.4 shows, respondents studied for these qualifications at a range of institutions, both within Saudi Arabia and abroad. It is noticeable that amongst the countries where these qualifications were earned, the UK was the leader for postgraduate qualifications in fields related to the English language.[20] One respondent preferred not to provide the name of the institution where the PhD had been awarded, perhaps out of concern that doing so might compromise the respondent's anonymity.

[20] Many of the student questionnaire respondents stated that they preferred English-speaking countries as a postgraduate study destination because they saw spending a period in these countries as a valuable opportunity to practise their language skills.

Table 5.4: Institutions where staff qualifications were awarded

KAU		**Other Universities**	
BA	N/A	BA	4
		KAR (KSA) Effat University (KSA) University of Tunis (Tunisia) PNU (KSA)	
MA	3	MA	7
Institut Supérieur des Langues (Tunisia) Um Al-Qura University (KSA) KAU (KSA)		Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (KSA) Durham University (UK) Manchester University (UK) Salford University (UK) University of Birmingham (UK) Kent State University (USA) KSU (KSA)	
PhD	2	PhD	2
KAU (KSA) KAU (KSA)		University of Leeds (UK) No institution specified.	

With regard to respondents' areas of specialisation, participants described these areas as shown in Table 5.5. Analysis showed that 12 of the 15 respondents from the other universities represented in the sample had earned undergraduate degrees in which the major emphasis had been on translation or translation studies. Only one of the KAU staff mentioned translation, but translation had only been a minor named component of their undergraduate programme.

Table 5.5: Staff members' areas of specialisation

KAU	**No.**	**Other Universities**	**No.**
Psycholinguistics with Translation	1	Translation/Translation Studies	12
Linguistics	3	Linguistics/Applied Linguistics	2
English Language and Literature	1	English Language and Literature	1

Respondents were asked to state the number of years they had been teaching translation. The sample is small (5 respondents from KAU, and 15 respondents from other universities) (see Section 9.6), so drawing conclusions is difficult. However, the experience profile of the KAU respondents does appear different to that of the larger sample of respondents from other Saudi universities. For the non-KAU staff, the vast majority (n=11) had been teaching translation for five years or less, and none of these respondents had more than 15 years of translation teaching experience. At KAU, however, three of the five staff respondents had been teaching translation for over 15 years, and all staff members had a minimum of six years' experience. This may explain why none of the staff from KAU had studied at a UK institution at postgraduate level; KAU staff is female-only, so the opportunity to study abroad would not have been open to these respondents previously due to Saudi government policy at that time. It is also highly likely that the non-KAU respondents, who were younger than the KAU respondents, were participants in the King Abdullah Scholarship Programme;[21] if that is the case, these results help demonstrate the impact that this initiative has had on Saudi women.

[21] See Section 1.2.1 for further details on KASP.

The *NCAAA Handbook* (2015: 14)[22] highlights the importance of teaching staff being "appropriately qualified and experienced for their particular teaching responsibilities".

However, the profile revealed by the questionnaire may suggest that unless a good programme of continuing professional development is present in these institutions, some staff—particularly those at KAU—may struggle with teaching some of the specialist skills required by translators, in particular IT skills and familiarity with translation software. This issue emerged in the responses to the student questionnaires (see Chapter 6).

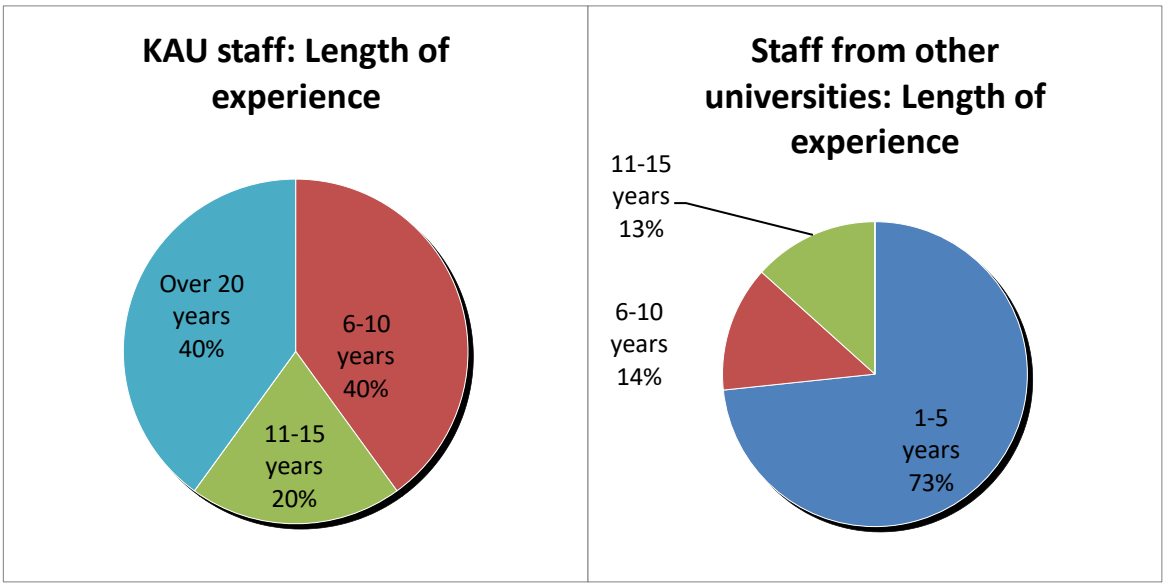


Figure 5.1: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Length of translation teaching experience

[22] According to its handbook, the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) has responsibility in Saudi Arabia for "determining standard and criteria for academic accreditation and assessment and accrediting post-secondary institutions and the programmes they offer" (*Handbook for Quality Assurance and Accreditation*, 2015: 3). It was established in 2004 as an autonomous body and is directly responsible to the Kingdom's Council of Higher Education (www.mohe.gov.sa/en/aboutus/institutions/Pages/academic-accreditation).

When asked whether they would describe themselves as a specialist in translation, responses from the two groups of participants were as shown in Figure 5.2.

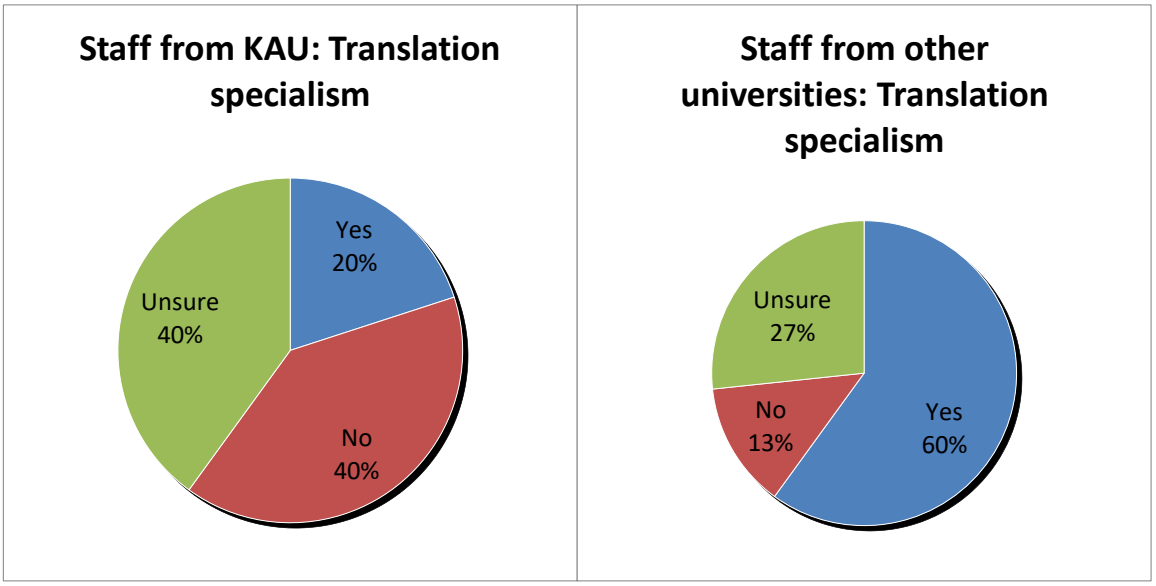


Figure 5.2: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Would you describe yourself as a specialist in translation?

Again, with regard to how the sample of respondents view their level of expertise in relation to translation, a difference emerges between the KAU staff profile and that of their counterparts elsewhere. Only one of the KAU respondents was confident enough to apply the self-descriptor of 'specialist' in the field of translation, even though all KAU respondents are experienced university lecturers (see Figure 5.1). In contrast, although the respondents from other universities generally reported less experience, nine of the 15 who replied chose to describe themselves as translation specialists.

The next part of the questionnaire focuses on staff input into the curriculum. In Q7, respondents were asked to list the translation modules that they have taught in the

past or were currently teaching. This information develops individual profiles, but also builds up a picture of the range of provision offered within the Saudi university sector. Table 5.6, therefore, lists the names of the translation-related modules and maps these modules to the institutions which offer them. Unfortunately, despite several requests, the respondents from Qassim University (QU1) and Princess Nora University (PNU1) respectively did not provide any named modules, so it is not possible to include these institutions' modules in the results of the mapping exercise presented in Table 5.6.

Respondents from KAU's sister institution based at the Rabigh campus and from KSU also included modules in interpreting. These modules have been listed separately (see Table 5.6), as this area does not constitute the major focus of interest in this study. At-sight translation has been included under the heading of interpreting since it involves an oral element, requiring the translator to provide a spoken version in the target language of a written text in the source language.

Table 5.6: Translation modules that respondents have taught in the past or are currently teaching

Translation modules	**KAU**	**KAR**	**KSU**	**TU**
Introduction to translation	✓	✓		
Translation theory	✓	✓		✓
Translation techniques		✓		
Contemporary issues in translation		✓		
Translation of Islamic texts		✓		
Legal translation			✓	
Economic translation		✓	✓	
Political translation		✓		
Journalistic translation		✓		
Translation of commercial texts			✓	
Military translation			✓	
Scientific and technical translation			✓	
Translation of official documents		✓		
Translation of texts relating to social issues			✓	
Summary translation		✓	✓	
Arabisation[23]		✓		
Interpreting modules				
Simultaneous interpreting		✓		
Liaison interpreting		✓	✓	
Consecutive interpreting		✓	✓	
At-sight translation			✓	

This mapping is based on a limited sample of respondents' answers to Q7; it does not provide a detailed account of the courses which students can follow. However, it does provide some useful insights into general tendencies within this area.[24] Firstly, translation theory is included as a component in some courses. Secondly, some

[23] Arabisation can refer to two processes, and translation of English source texts for Arabic-speaking Islamic audiences often involves both. According to El Badawy (2010: online), "Arabization is a process that localizes foreign text or a term and reshapes it to match the Arab mentality. The original elements of the Arabic language are used rather than literal translation." Thus Arabisation may require the creation of a new Arabic term to replace an English one, rather than relying on transliteration of the original English word. It may also require translators to use their cultural sensitivity when transferring text intended for a Western Christian/secular audience to an Islamic Arabic-speaking one. Some Saudi companies/institutions may expect their translators to follow a specific policy when translating English language texts, e.g. editing out references to alcohol consumption.

[24] Outlines of some the main universities' course structures including module titles (but not detailed descriptors of content) can be found in Appendix 11.

courses expose students to a range of specialist text types. It is noticeable here that none of the respondents mentioned translation of literary texts, for example. Thirdly, institutions also offer students exposure to more specific translation types such as summary translation[25] and techniques such as Arabisation. This list also makes it clear given the staff profile of qualifications and experience that these modules do not necessarily align with the modules these staff may be teaching in all cases.

5.2 The Translation Programme in the Department

After the first section of the questionnaire had established the profile of the respondents, the focus shifted in the second section to the translation programme taught at the various universities and participants' opinions of this provision.

Q8 was intended to establish the level at which translation is introduced to students in their degree programme. However, for reasons that are not wholly clear, whereas this item produced a unanimous response from KAU staff, who all agreed on a level of five, in the case of KSU and KAR, this item elicited a range of answers. The sole respondent from PNU did not answer it.

[25] This skill is also referred to as précis in some institutions. According to the Transperfect website, "Summary translations are ideal for situations where the turnaround time is extremely short. A certified linguist will read through the document, assessing the most important elements of the texts as they go. This information is then summarized and translated into the target language, providing readers with a concise and accurate summary translation of the essential content. [This technique] is regularly applied to create target language summaries of newspaper articles, press releases and other published materials."
(Source: http://www.transperfect.com/services/translation_summary.html).

Table 5.7: Level at which translation is introduced in the programme

Institution	**Level**				
	2	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
KAU				✓	
KSU	KSU1	KSU2		KSU4 KSU5 KSU6	KSU3
KAR		KAR1 KAR3 KAR6	KAR2 KAR4 KAR5		
TU		✓			
QU		✓			

The discrepancy observed here has two likely explanations. Respondents may have interpreted the word 'level' in different ways. For example, it may have been variously understood to mean 'semester' or 'year of programme'. Alternatively, respondents may have interpreted 'translation' as referring to its use as either a general language skill taught to all students or as a more specialised option offered to more advanced students. Whatever the case, this response makes it more difficult to interpret the findings for the related question, Q9, which was designed to elicit opinions about the timing of the introduction of translation in the course.

Table 5.8 Semester in which translation is introduced as a named component of the degree course

Institution	**Semester**	**Title of module**
King Abdulaziz University	S5 only	Introduction to Translation
Al-Imam University	S3	Introduction to Translation
Jeddah University		
King Abdulaziz University (Rabigh)		
King Khalid University	S6	Translation (1)

King Saud University	S6	Introduction to Translation Studies
Princess Nora University	S4	Introduction to Translation
Qassim University		No info
Saudi Electronic University		No info
Taiba University		
Taif University	S2	Introduction to Translation
Umm Al-Qura	S6	Translation (1)

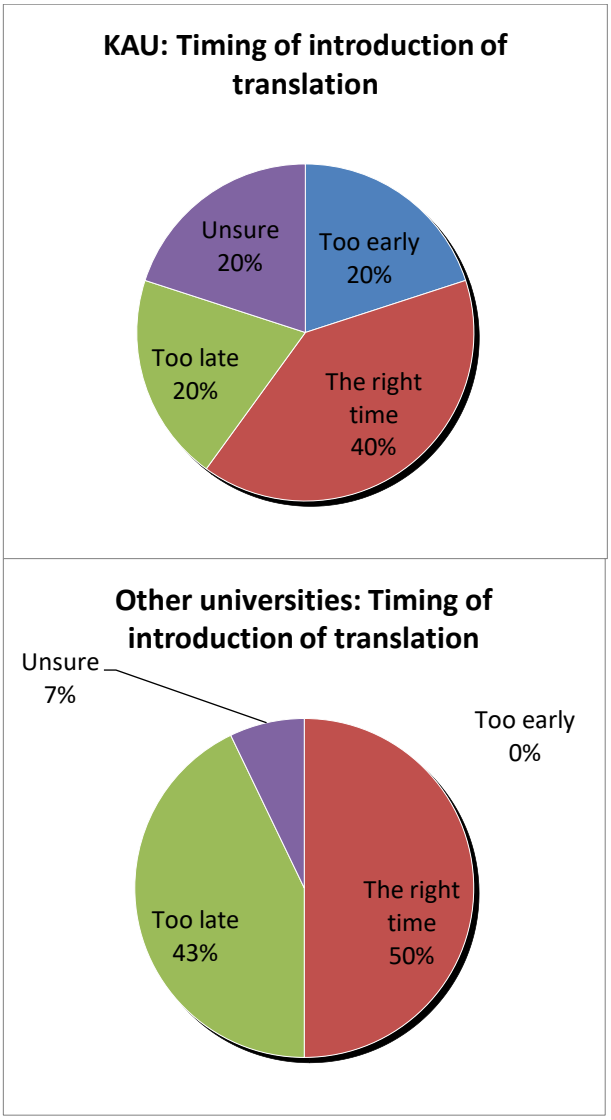


Figure 5.3: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Timing of introduction of translation

As previously, caution must be exercised when comparing the opinions of KAU staff with those of non-KAU staff (particularly when staff may have different understandings in this context of 'translation'). In general terms, the staff at other universities seemed to be more divided about the timing of the introduction of 'translation', however they understood the term.

In Q10, respondents were asked their opinion about whether they thought the objectives of the translation modules were made clear to students at the beginning of the semester. All five respondents from KAU were in agreement that objectives were made clear to students from the beginning of the semester. Opinions were more varied amongst the staff of other universities, as shown in Figure 5.4. The majority thought the objectives were clear (57%, *n*=8), but 14% (*n*=2) disagreed, and 29% (*n*=4) were not sure.

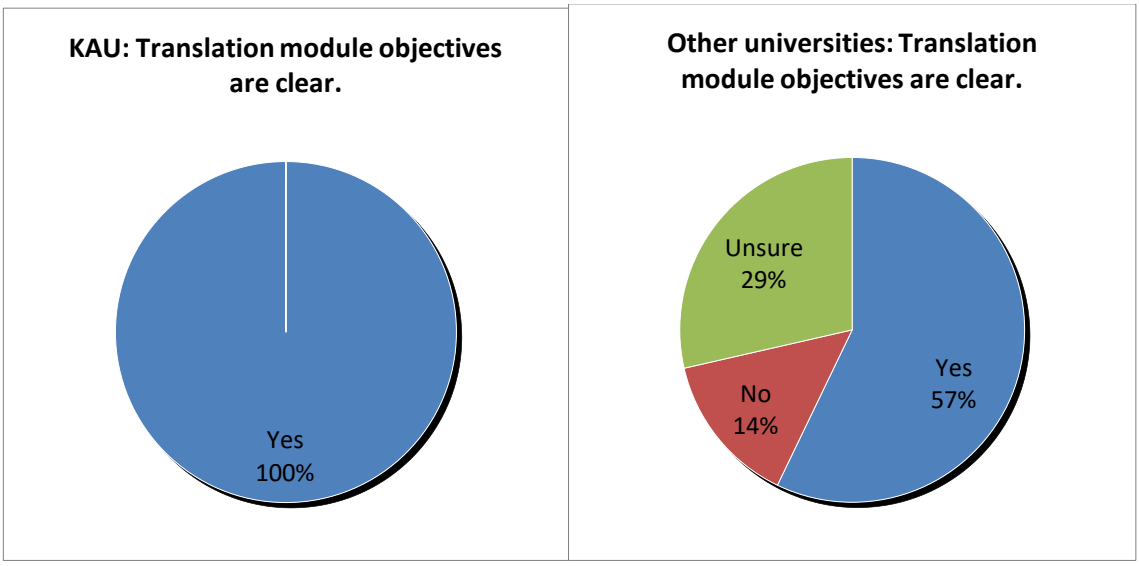


Figure 5.4: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Clarity of translation module objectives

Insights into these opinions were provided by the second part of Q10, which asked respondents to explain how the module objectives were made clear to their students. In the case of KAU, several methods were used to convey these objectives to students: in the first class, a paper copy of the course plan was distributed by the course instructor (KAU2, KAU3), who also verbally explained the objectives to students (KAU4). In addition, the objectives along with the course syllabus were posted on the virtual learning environment known as Blackboard (KAU5). Similar procedures appeared to be followed at KAR, where a course portfolio including the translation syllabus and course plans was presented to students in the first session (KAR1, KAR4, KAR6). These procedures also took place at KSU, where course details and the syllabus were presented in the first lecture of the course (KSU2, KSU5). No details were provided for QU, PNU, or TU.

Respondents were then asked in Q11 to think about whether they, as the teachers delivering the modules, found the course aims and objectives clear. As previously, there was unanimity in the responses of KAU staff, who all felt that the course aims and objectives were clear. A small number of staff from other HE institutions (KSU2, KAR2, TU1) thought that the course aims and objectives lacked clarity, and a similar number (KSU1, KSU3, KSU4) were not sure. However, overall 60% (*n*=9) found the aims and objectives of the course were clear to them.

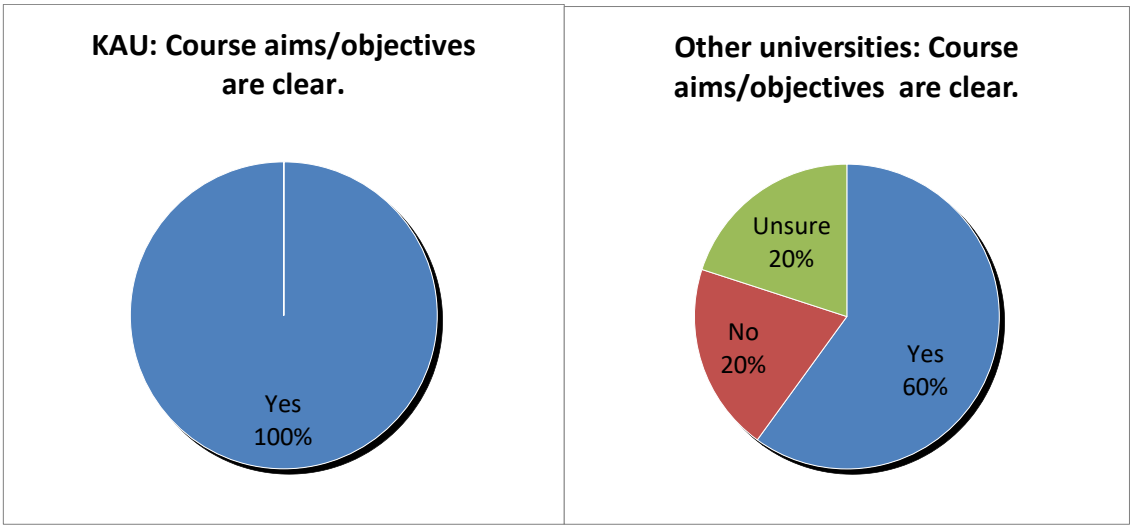


Figure 5.5: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Clarity of course aims and objectives

The next three items on the questionnaire (Q12-14) focused on whether students' aptitude in translation skills was measured at specific points of the course and, if so, how this measurement was done. All applicants seeking admission to study languages at university must take a general admission test upon beginning their first year (also known as a first year placement test). The test in use for placement is the Oxford Online Placement Test (OOPT), which places students at the appropriate level in courses using the *New Headway Plus Special Edition* textbook series in order to test candidates across a broad range of skills. Q12 was intended to identify whether any of the respondents' institutions included an element in this general admission test designed to specifically test the translation skills of prospective students of the English language.

Responses from KAU staff confirmed that applicants seeking admission to language programmes were not assessed on their translation skills in any pre-entry tests. It

seems safe to assume that this is also the case at all the other institutions represented by non-KAU respondents, with just three staff members being unsure: two from KSU (KSU3, KSU5) and one from PNU (PNU1).

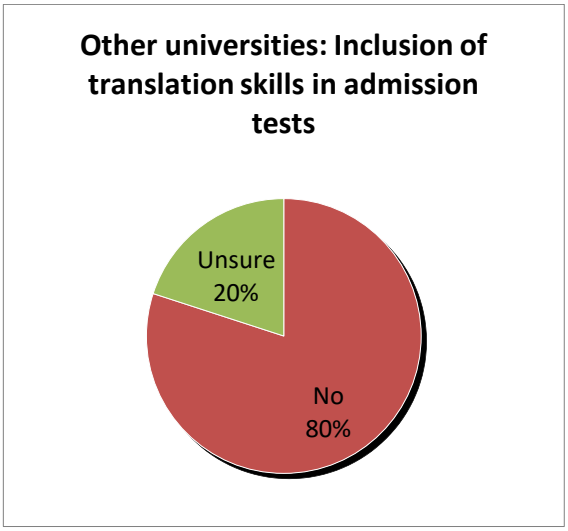


Figure 5.6: Non-KAU staff: Assessment of translation skills in departmental general admission test

The following item, Q13, focused more specifically on identifying whether any admission criteria for entry to the translation programme that treat translation as a separate strand of the English Language degree course. Since translation is a compulsory element within the programme at KAU, the questionnaire specified that only respondents from the other universities, i.e. KSU, KAR, PNU, QU, and TU, should respond to this item (see Figure 5.7).

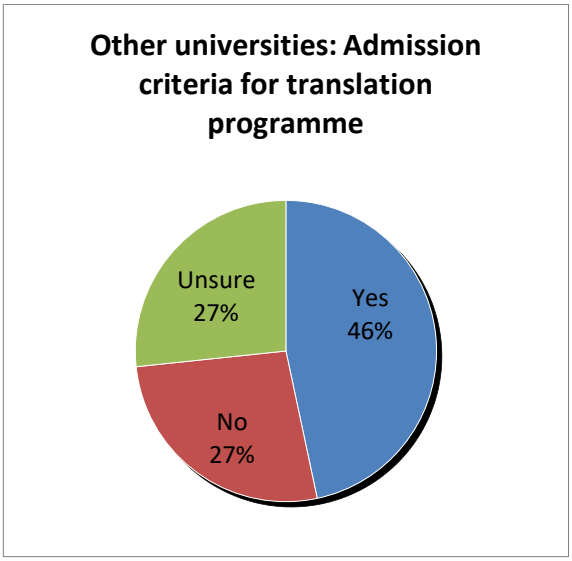


Figure 5.7: Non-KAU staff: Admission criteria for the translation programme

As previously occurred with Q8, responses to Q13 from KAR and KSU staff appeared contradictory (see Figure 5.7). When the responses are disaggregated, it becomes clear that five KAR respondents (KAR1, KAR2, KAR4, KAR5, KAR6) stated that criteria did exist while two of their colleagues (KAR1, KAR7) stated they did not. KSU staff also disagreed on this point: KSU3 stated 'yes', KSU2 'no', and three other respondents from this institution were unsure (KSU1, KSU4, KSU5). The respondent from PNU was also unsure about the response to this question. It is possible that this item elicited a range of answers because respondents interpreted it in different ways. Another possibility is that as some of these staff have only been in post for a relatively short amount of time (see Figure 5.1), their answers may reflect their relative lack of knowledge of departmental procedures and non-involvement in student admissions.

The written responses to Q13, which also asks for further details about the admission criteria, helps to clarify the position at KAR. Namely, all five KAR

respondents (KAR1, KAR2, KAR4, KAR5, KAR6) identified the criterion as having a grade point average (GPA) of over 75% in basic English skills modules (ENGL240, 205, 206, 207, and 208). These modules cover speaking, writing, and listening. At QU, the course entitled Introduction to Translation is a prerequisite for admission to higher-level translation courses. At KSU, only one respondent (KSU3) claimed criteria existed, but the respondent was then only able to provide a rather vague criterion of "being excellent in both English and Arabic". It is possible that criteria do exist but are ill defined, as reflected in the uncertainty expressed by fellow colleagues (KSU1, KSU4, KSU5). KSU institution was approached for further information on this point, but it was not provided.

KAU staff were asked to respond to a different Q12, which was intended to gauge their opinions concerning the purpose of teaching translation at KAU (see Figure 5.8). Four respondents (KAU1, KAU2, KAU3, KAU4) agreed that translation is taught to improve grammatical knowledge. Three of those respondents (KAU1, KAU3, KAU4) also thought translation served the purpose of training students to be professional translators. Just two respondents saw its value as a means to prepare students to teach English (KAU1, KAU3). KAU4 also added that translation improves students' writing skills.

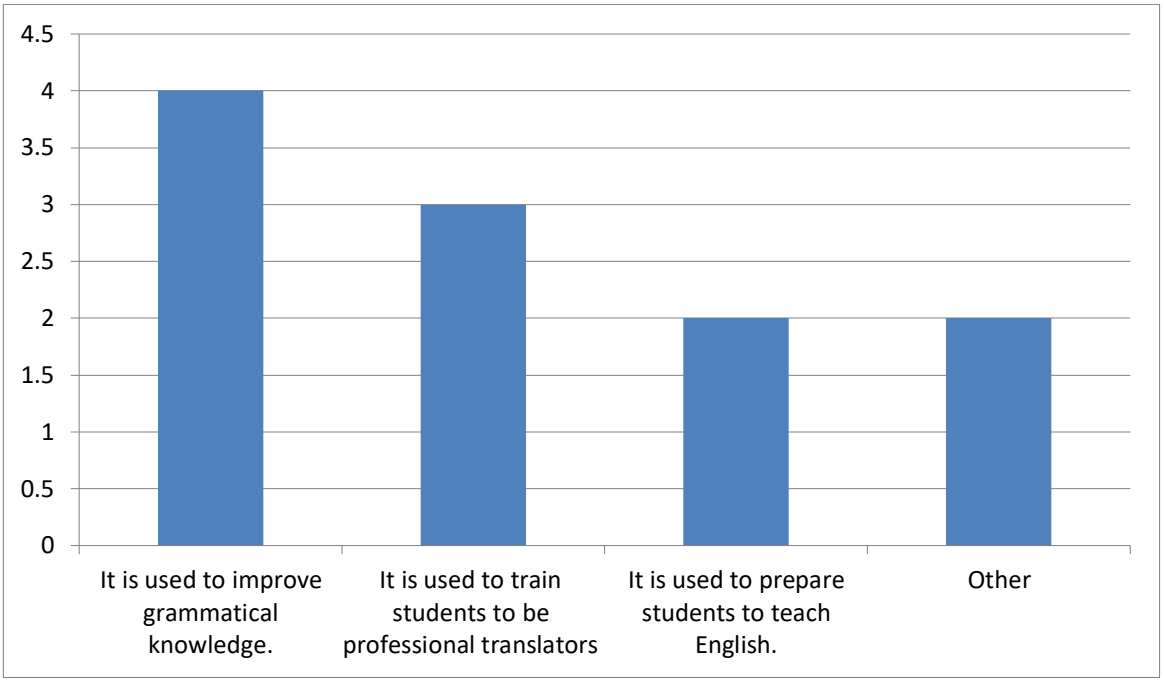


Figure 5.8: KAU staff: The purpose of teaching translation at KAU

In one of the longest and most considered responses among all the responses to open-ended questions, KAU3 identified five different reasons for teaching translation. The first was to "give background knowledge about translation"; KAU3 added that this knowledge should be "both theoretical and practical". The second reason was "To bring to light the significance of translation in the world today". The third was "To open the students' minds to the role of translation in enriching and spreading cultures and civilization", and the fourth was "To deepen students' understanding of languages and how different people use them for communication". While some or all the above objectives might be found in the syllabus descriptors for translation studies modules taught by UK universities,[26] the fifth and final

[26] Course/syllabus descriptors for Modern Languages in the UK draw their inspiration from the Subject Benchmark Statement for Languages, Cultures and Societies (2015). This document, produced by the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, defines what can be expected

purpose highlighted by KAU4 was "To shed light on the power of the human mind created by Allah – language is a sign of God's power and perfection". In a western educational context, this reason would not be cited as a purpose of teaching translation. However, from the Islamic perspective, this reason makes absolute sense, as Muslims have a particular relationship with Arabic, which they believe to be the language in which the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Mohammed.

Q14 was addressed to both KAU staff and staff of other Saudi universities. It used a five-point Likert-type scale to gauge their opinions concerning the extent to which the current translation modules could be said to contribute to fulfilling the learning outcomes for the programme (see Figure 5.9).

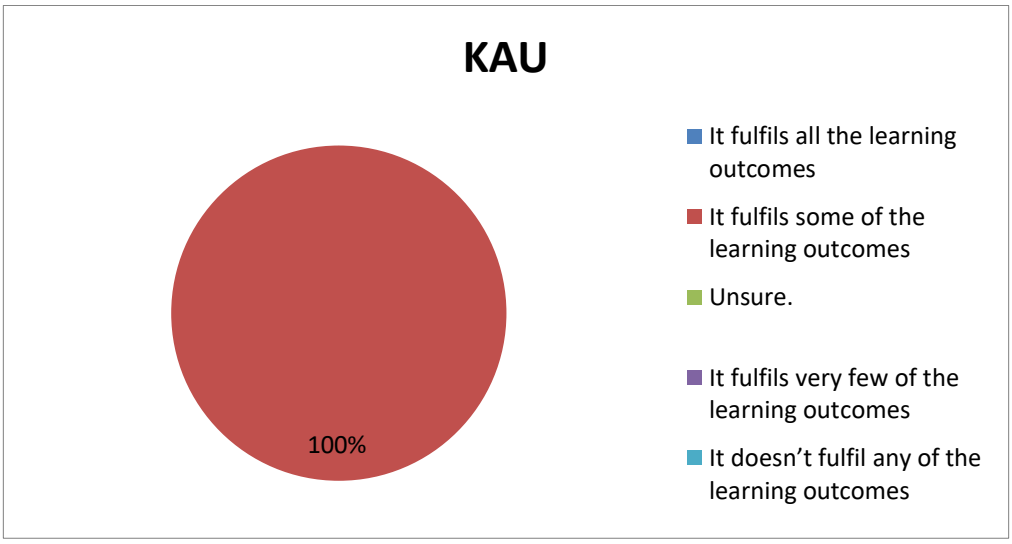


Figure 5.9: KAU staff: Extent to which the current translation modules fulfil programme learning outcomes

of a graduate in a particular subject/discipline "in terms of what they might know, do and understand at the end of their studies" (QAA, 2015: 1). There is no Saudi equivalent of this document.

All five KAU staff were in agreement that the current translation modules could be considered to fulfil some, but not all, of the learning outcomes of the course which they taught. As Figure 5.10 shows, responses from staff at other Saudi universities were more varied.

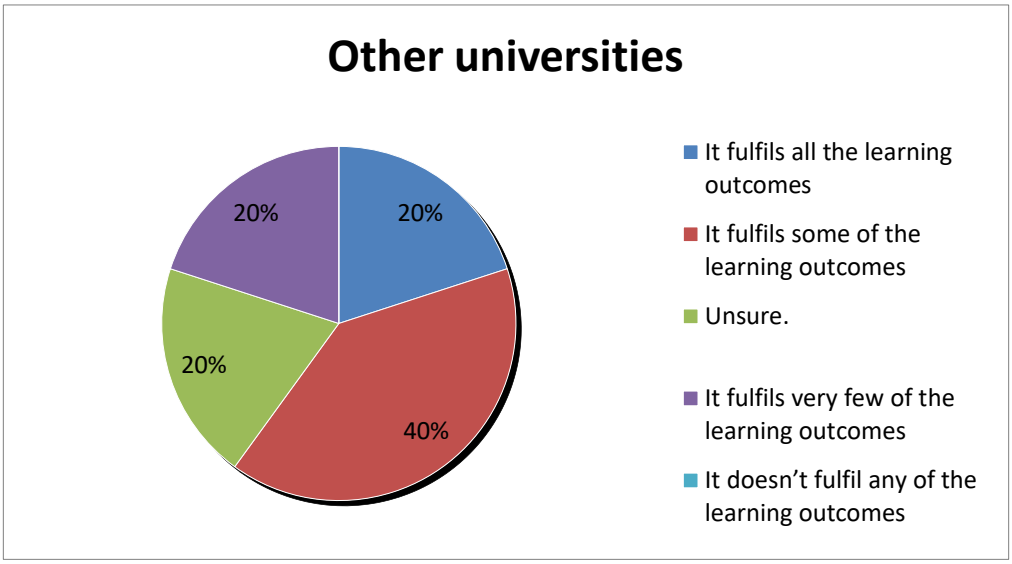


Figure 5.10: Non-KAU staff: Extent to which the current translation modules fulfil programme learning outcomes

More detailed analysis of these aggregate responses by university (provided in Table 5.9) shows that none of the respondents from either KSU or KAR were wholly negative about the current translation provision in relation to fulfilling learning outcomes. At KSU, four of the respondents shared similar opinions, while KSU2 and KSU6 were respectively more positive and less positive than their colleagues. The pattern for KAR was different, with half of the respondents unsure, two overwhelmingly positive, and one somewhat negative.

Table 5.9: KSU and KAR staff: Extent to which the current translation modules fulfil programme learning outcomes

	It fulfils all learning outcomes.	**It fulfils some learning outcomes.**	**Unsure.**	**It fulfils very few learning outcomes.**	**It doesn't fulfil any learning outcomes.**
KSU	KSU2	KSU1 KSU3 KSU4 KSU5		KSU6	
KAR	KAR3 KAR5		KAR1 KAR2 KAR6	KAR4	

The next item on the questionnaire (Q15) also used a Likert-type five-point scale to explore staff attitudes about the extent to which staff thought their departmental programme prepared students for a career as a professional translator. On this issue, KAU staff showed a range of opinions, but none thought the current programme prepared students fully for this type of career after graduation. Given that translation is not the sole focus of the degree, this result is understandable. More striking in this case is the fact that one member of KAU staff thought it prepared students for very few aspects of this career (20%) while another thought it did not prepare them for any aspect of a career as a professional translator (20%).

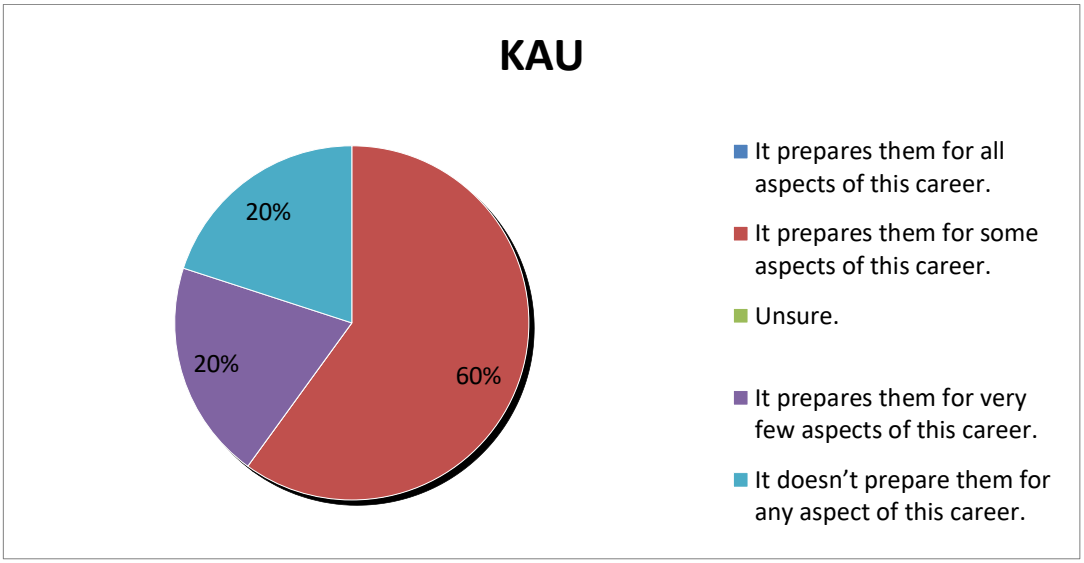


Figure 5.11: KAU staff: Extent to which current translation modules prepare students for careers as translators

It was also the case that none of the respondents from other universities thought their current course fully prepared students for careers as professional translators, as shown in Figure 5.12.

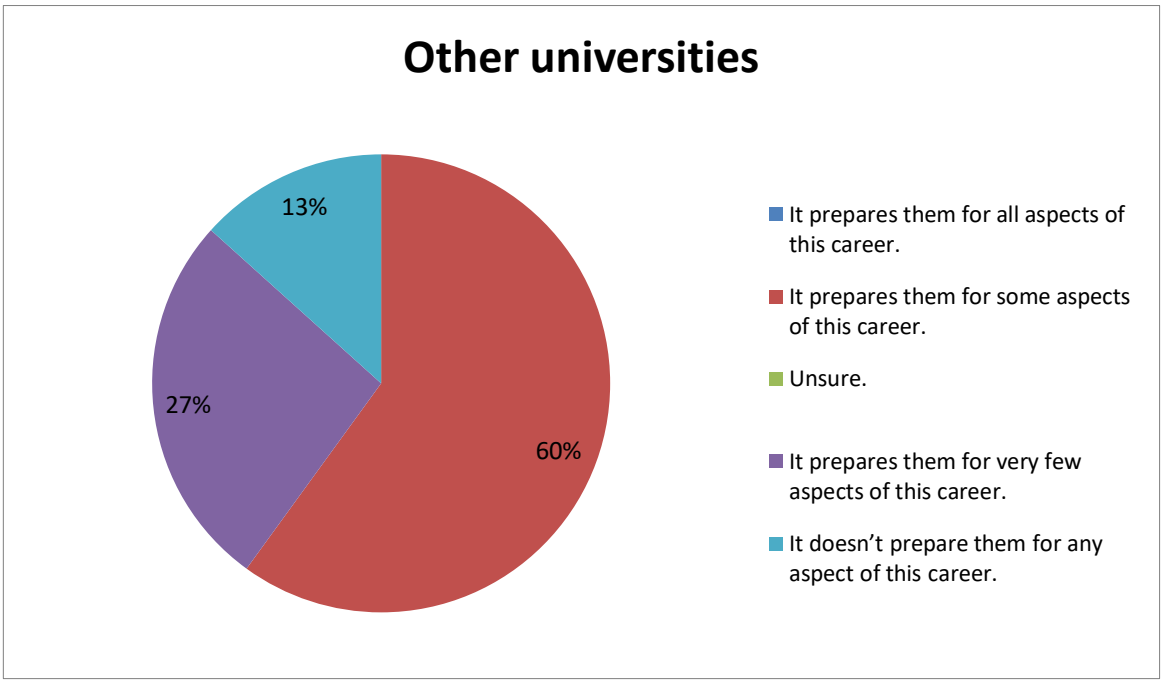


Figure 5.12: Non-KAU staff: Extent to which current translation modules prepare students for careers as translators

Most non-KAU respondents (*n*=9) agreed that the modules were partly successful in this respect. With regard to individual institutions (see Table 5.10), two-thirds of KSU staff were moderately positive, and the remaining third were moderately negative. The profile of responses for KAR was equally divided between positive and negative, with one member of staff (KAR3) expressing the opinion that the course did not prepare students for any aspects of this career. The same wholly negative opinion was expressed by TU1 about provision at Taif University.

Table 5.10: Non-KAU staff: Extent to which current translation modules prepare students for careers as translators

	It prepares them for all aspects of this career.	**It prepares them for some aspects of this career.**	**Unsure**	**It prepares them for very few aspects of this career.**	**It does not prepare them for any aspects of this career.**
KSU		KSU1 KSU2 KSU4 KSU5		KSU3 KSU6	
KAR		KAR1 KAR5 KAR6		KAR2 KAR4	KAR3
PNU		PNU1			
QU		QU1			
TU					TU1

All respondents were given the opportunity to provide further details to justify the opinions they had expressed about students' preparedness for careers as professional translators. Only one KAU staff member (KAU4) thought that while the

course did not prepare students for all aspects of this career, it did offer "encouragement to those students who were interested in becoming freelance translators". KAR3 did not think students were prepared for any aspects of this career because even though graduates "get to the stage where they translate more difficult material", the course emphasis remains on translation as an "academic field, not as a future career". TU1, who was similarly negative about students' lack of preparation for a career in this area, heavily criticised the theoretical emphasis of the course at Taif University:

> As long as the focus is on teaching theories, there won't be much chance of translation as a future career. I believe in practice. This is how I gained my experience in translation long before I obtained my MA in translation.

KSU2 also highlighted the need for students to gain more practical experience:

> During classes students are mostly trained on the *do's* and *don't's* of translation in each field. They focus on analysing texts. Teachers try to provide as much practical experience as possible, but students are expected to reach the intended learning outcomes which highlight the ability to translate. The only real professional experience students can acquire is during the graduation project, which gives them the choice between internships or book translation.

This issue of the balance between theory and practice also came to the fore in students' responses to the questionnaire; these responses are discussed in Chapter 8 of this thesis.

KSU3 also noted that translation courses are taught by faculty staff who have themselves never worked as translators, having "majored in linguistics" (see Section 5.1 on the importance of staff qualification and experience).

In Q16, participants were asked to explain how the content of course modules for translation is chosen in their institution. This item was primarily intended to give useful insight into the extent to which individuals either can influence curriculum content or are subject to broader controls of quality assurance and academic standards. However, the results (see Table 5.11) also serve to reveal the extent to which staff are aware of these processes within their institution.

Table 5.11 KAU and non-KAU staff: Methods by which translation module content is chosen

Institution	By module tutor	Discussed by module tutors and approved by department.	By committee following NCAAA standards	Another method
KAU		KAU3 KAU4 KAU5		KAU1 KAU2
KSU	KSU1 KSU2 KSU4 KSU5	KSU6	KSU3	
KAR	KAR2 KAR3 KAR4		KAR1 KAR5 KAR6	
PNU		PNU1		
QU			QU1	
TU				TU1

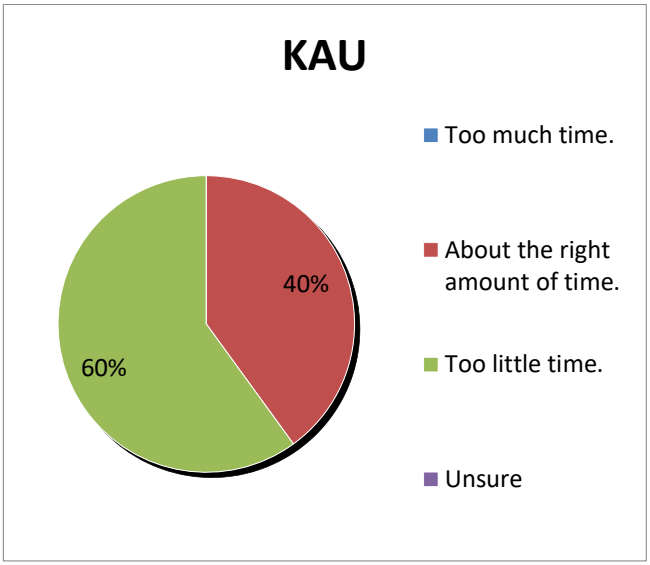
In the case of KAU1, KAU2 refers to "the curriculum committee". It is unclear whether this reference concerns the departmental committee or possibly the NCAAA approval processes.[27] KAU1 noted that "The textbook is assigned by the department"; it is unclear why the respondent chose to highlight this fact, which seems to refer more to teaching materials than to module content. In the case of KSU, while four respondents believe this issue is purely a question of personal choice, KSU6 stated that departmental approval was also required, while KSU3 thought that module content also needed to conform to NCAAA standards. Responses from KAR show half of the staff surveyed believe that module content is decided solely by the tutor in question, whereas the other half state it is subject to

[27] As a member of KAU staff, I know that there is no departmental or university committee specifically referred to as "the curriculum committee".

further scrutiny. In the case of KAU and KAR, it is interesting to note that although both institutions essentially fall under the aegis of KAU, they do not appear to share common processes regarding module accreditation. TU1 noted that decisions about module content are made by the head of department.

As previously noted, given the profile of the respondents in terms of experience, it is possible that some of these discrepancies may be because some younger staff are not fully aware of their institution's controls relating to quality assurance and academic standards.

Next, respondents were asked to consider in Q17 what they thought about the number of hours allocated to teaching on translation modules. The replies are shown in Figure 5.13 below. While 40% (*n*=2) of KAU respondents were happy with the numbers of hours given to translation teaching, 60% (*n*=3) thought more time was needed for this skill. In the case of the other universities, aggregated data show that the majority (62%, *n*=8) were satisfied with the teaching time dedicated to translation, but 23% (*n*=3) wanted more time spent on this skill, and 15% (*n*=2) wanted less time.



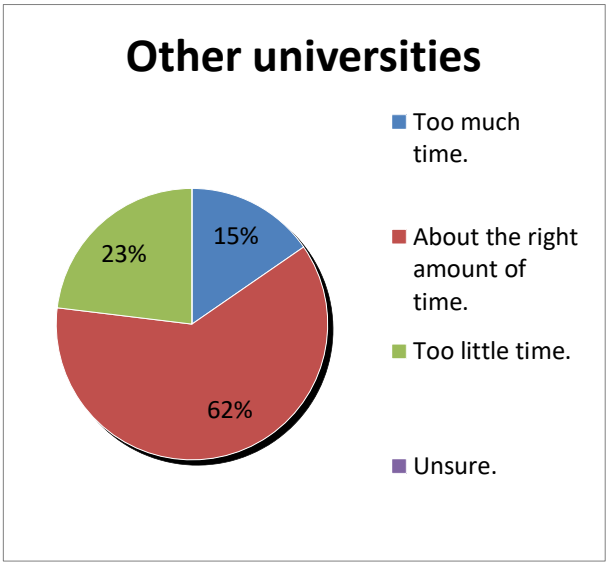


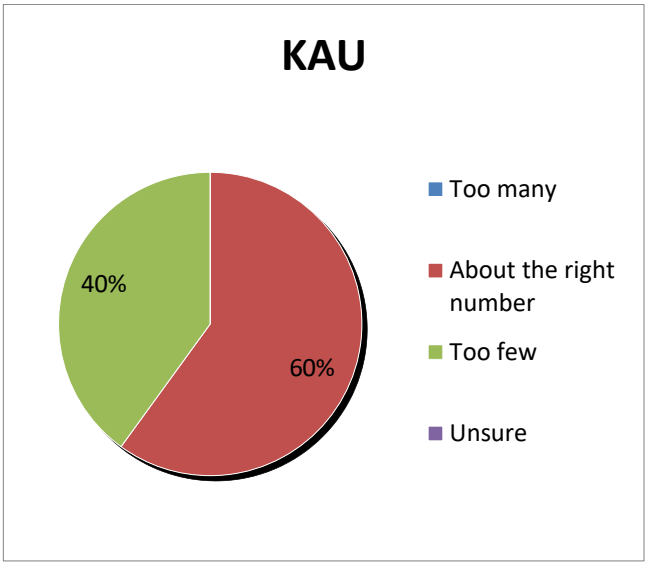
Figure 5.13: KAU vs. Non-KAU staff: Opinion on amount of time allocated to teaching in translation modules

Further analysis of the individual responses to Q17 (see Table 5.12) shows that in the case of KSU, only one member of staff (KSU3) thought that too little time was allocated to teaching in the translation modules. However, staff opinion was much more divided at KAR, as shown in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12: KAR staff: Opinion on amount of time allocated to teaching in translation modules

Institution	Too much time	About the right amount of time	Too little time	Unsure
KAR	KAR2 KAR4	KAR1 KAR5 KAR6	KAR3	

In Q18, respondents were asked their opinion about the number of translation modules that were currently being taught in their departmental programme, choosing from four options: too many translation modules, about the right number, too few, or unsure (see Figure 5.14).



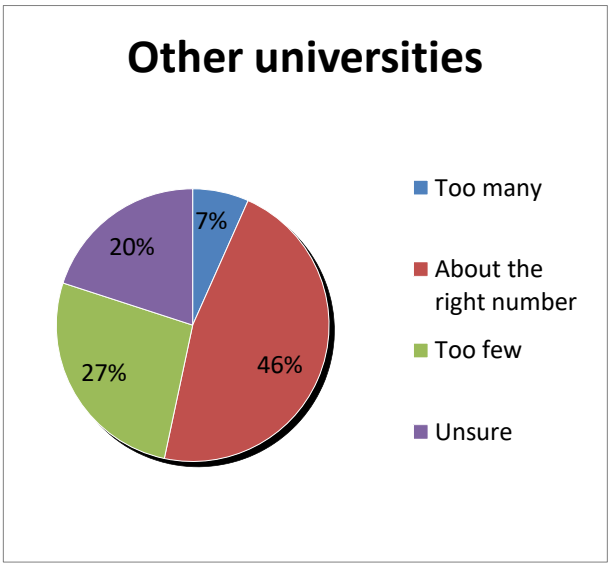


Figure 5.14: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Opinion on number of translation modules in the programme

The majority of KAU respondents (60%, *n*=3) were satisfied with number of translation modules on the course, but 40% (*n*=2) thought more modules should be available. The profile of responses from staff from other universities was more varied than that for KAU for this item and again merited further analysis of individual responses (see Table 5.13). While KAR respondents largely agreed that

the current number of modules was about right, staff opinion was more divided at KSU as shown in Table 5.13.

Table 5.13: KSU and KAR staff: Opinion on number of translation modules in the programme

Institution	**Too many**	**About the right number**	**Too few**	**I am not sure.**
KSU	KSU5	KSU1 KSU2	KSU4	KSU3
KAR		KAR1 KAR3 KAR4 KAR5 KAR6	KAR2 KAR7	

It is difficult to interpret some of these findings in terms of what they may tell us about what constitutes the 'right' number of contact hours or the balance of modules within a course. Opinions may be swayed by individual viewpoints on what can be achieved in a contact hour; some teachers may facilitate learning much more effectively than others, for example. Opinions on what emphasis should be given to translation within a degree programme may similarly be influenced by an individual's own specialism. This potential for individual bias highlights the need for a range of stakeholders to be involved in curriculum planning to ensure that courses achieve the specified outcomes for the programme (NCAAA, 2015).

KAU participants were asked to give suggestions about improving the translation elements included in the programme. Most of these participants highlighted a desire for a greater presence of translation in the course, with participants stating that

translation should be expanded to all levels (KAU4) or required for at least three semesters (KAU5). The need for teaching computer-assisted translation was also mentioned (KAU2).

Respondents from other universities were also asked to provide suggestions for improving the translation elements included in their programme. Their suggestions related mainly to meeting course objectives and meeting students' needs. No suggestions were made by PNU1, TU1, or QU1.

Staff at KSU wanted more translation theory to be included (KSU3, KSU4), but were also keen to broaden the current range of text types to include mass media (KSU2, KSU5) and politics (KSU2). KSU3 highlighted the need for specific skill training in editing machine translation and suggested that space on the timetable could be freed up by dropping courses that were unpopular with students, citing the French language as a specific example.

KAR1 wanted more input on translation studies. In addition, like their counterparts at KSU, KAR lecturers wanted to extend the types of texts used in translation to include psychology (KAR3), medical reports (KAR3, KAR1), and biography (KAR3). KAR3 thought there was a need for more self-directed activities for students. The suggestion of including a final-year project was made (KAR5), and the same respondent also suggested including a module focusing on teaching translation. The need for students to have more technical training was highlighted (KAR4).

Interestingly, KAR5 suggested more attention needed to be given to improving students' use not only of English but also of Arabic to avoid linguistic interference.

Non-KAU staff were also asked to suggest translation modules that could be included in the programme to help to meet the current needs of the job market. Fewer responses were received for this item and, as previously, no suggestions were made by PNU1, TU1, or QU1. It is unclear why these three individuals frequently chose not respond to questionnaire items. It may simply be a case of "respondent fatigue" (Lavrakas, 2008: 743), which arises when respondents are too tired or bored to complete a survey. Respondent fatigue could have been compounded by the fact that they did not want to write in English or felt unable to express themselves easily in this language.

KSU respondents highlighted the need to incorporate media translation and interpreting modules into the course (KSU2) and the need for a placement programme (KSU3). In the case of KAR, only one specific suggestion relating to a module was received, indicating a call for a Translation Project Management module (KAR4). Other staff made more general points, emphasising the need to raise students' awareness of job market trends (KAR1) and integrate information about the private sector in curriculum planning (KAR5).

As Chapter 6 shows, many of these comments resonate with those made by student respondents. This alignment suggests that the formal process of gathering feedback

from undergraduates in Saudi Arabian universities made staff often aware of student levels of satisfaction. Nonetheless, Saudi Arabian universities still need formalised procedures for regularly obtaining, analysing, and responding to feedback from students (NCAA, 2015: 6). However, they were all much less clear about how the feedback that the respondents had provided would be used to make improvements to the student learning experience. This lack of clarity indicates that while obtaining and analysing feedback from stakeholders may be relatively easy within a university setting, ensuring that the stakeholders clearly understand how that feedback has been used and the purpose it has served is much harder. This point is discussed further in the discussion in Chapter 8.

Q20 also related to post-graduation employability and asked respondents to rate the relative importance that should be given to ensuring that students had experience with different text types to satisfy the current needs of the Saudi job market. Once again, the results for KAU are presented separately from those of the other universities (see Figure 5. KAU staff: and Figure 5.15: KAU staff: Text types and the needs of the Saudi job market respectively).

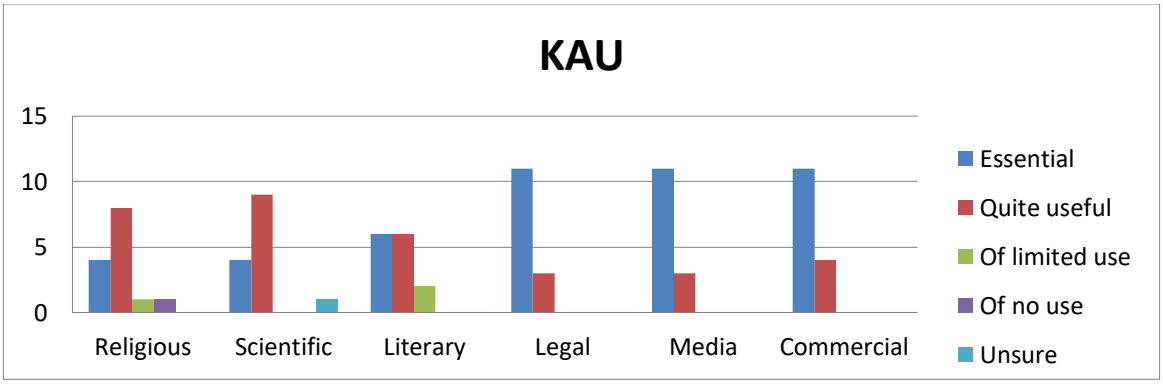


Figure 5.15: KAU staff: Text types and the needs of the Saudi job market

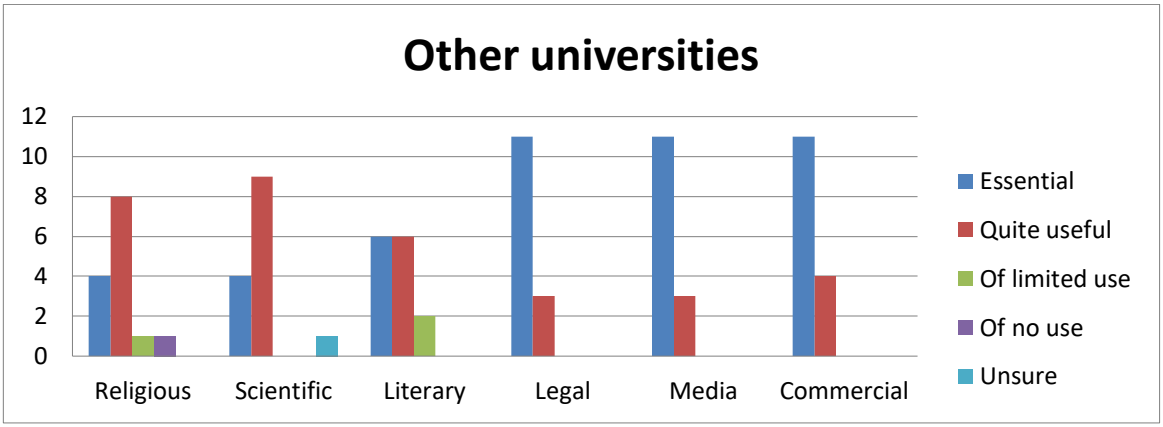


Figure 5.16: Non-KAU staff: Text types and the needs of the Saudi job market

Although it is quite difficult to compare the results in absolute terms, KAU staff appear to have given more importance to scientific texts and less to commercial (i.e. business-related) texts than their counterparts elsewhere. Respondents from other universities rated scientific text experience overall as quite useful rather than essential and gave a much higher importance to commercial text types, with 11 of the 15 respondents rating experience with commercial text types as essential.

It is not possible here to ascertain whether staff respondents were thinking about Arabic–English or English–Arabic translation when making these choices; this may have influenced how they felt about particular areas.

The focus in the next two items, Q21 and Q22, shifted to respondents' knowledge about what is taught in translation programmes in other universities in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere. Respondents were asked firstly about their awareness of course

content in other Saudi universities offering translation programmes. Results for KAU versus results for staff in other universities are shown in Figure 5.17.

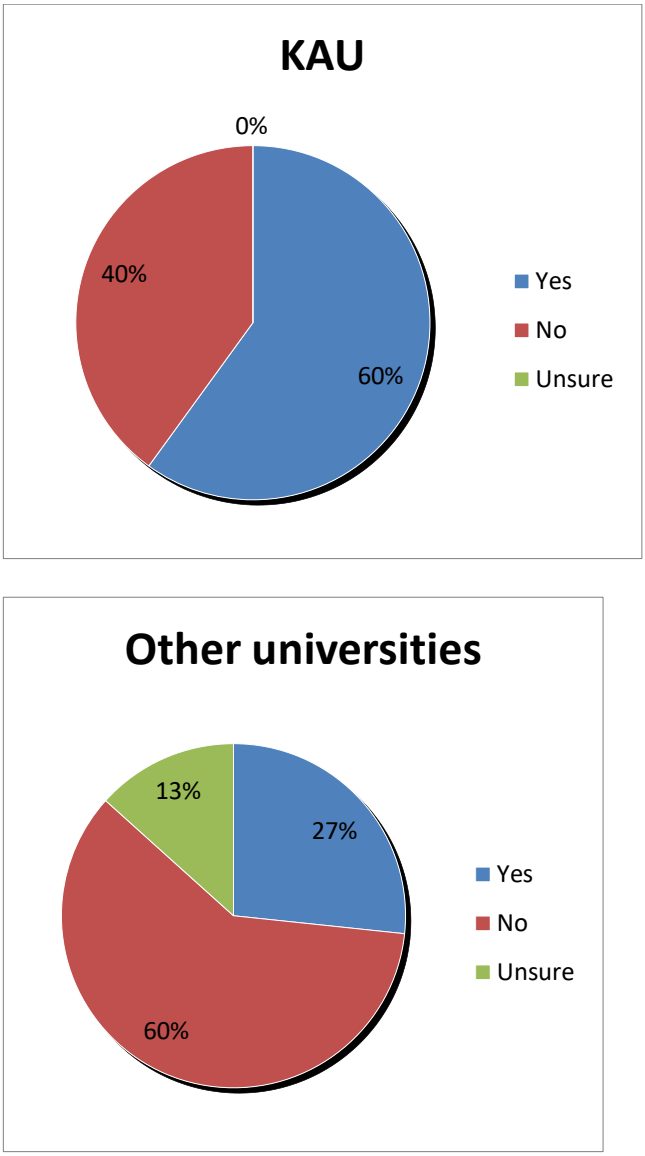
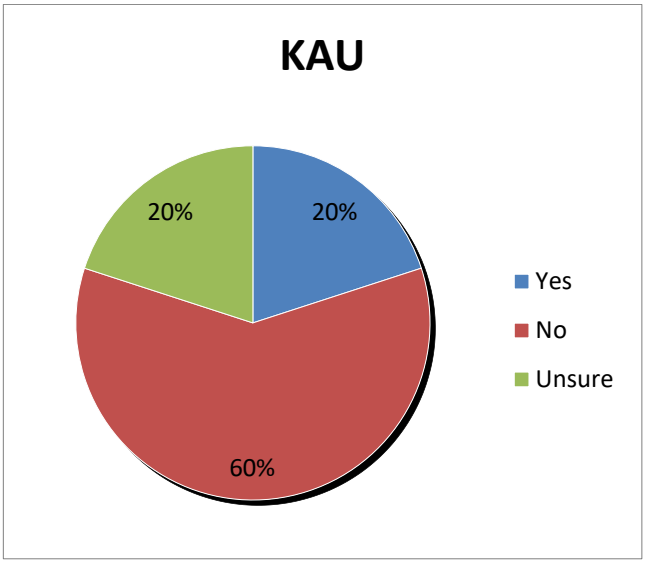


Figure 5.17: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Awareness of course content in Saudi universities with translation programmes

It is difficult to compare percentages here in absolute terms given the small numbers of respondents for KAU. However, a relatively low percentage (27%, *n*=4) of staff from other universities seemed to be aware of the content of translation

programmes in other universities. This lack of awareness may be due to the fact that course information does not tend to be freely available in the public domain in Saudi Arabia. In addition, Saudi state universities do not usually view each other as competitor institutions for example, where the forces of marketisation are much stronger (Bunce, Baird and Jones, 2017). Saudi state universities are also perhaps less interested in knowing about what is on offer elsewhere in the Kingdom in general. Most students in urban areas automatically go to the university that is closest to their family home.

In Q22, respondents were asked about their level of awareness of course content in universities offering translation outside Saudi Arabia (Figure 5.18).



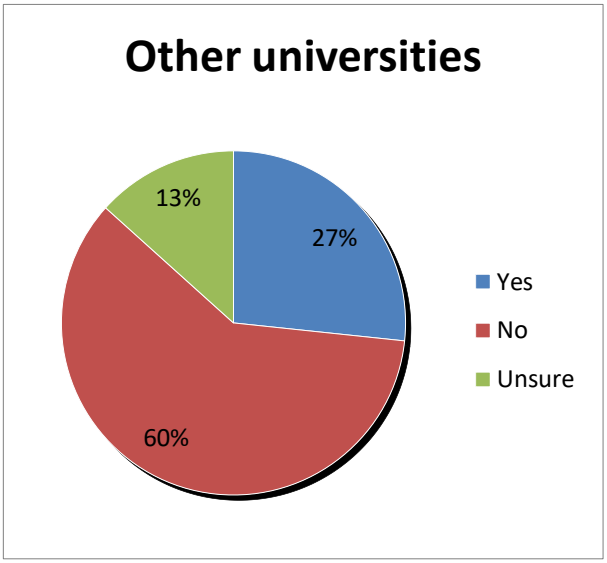


Figure 5.18: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Awareness of course content in non-Saudi universities with translation programmes

Percentages for responses to this item did not differ markedly from the percentages for response to the previous item. This similarity seems somewhat surprising given that the results from an earlier item (Q3) show that six of the thirteen respondents had gained postgraduate qualifications studying in institutions outside Saudi Arabia (see Table 5.4).

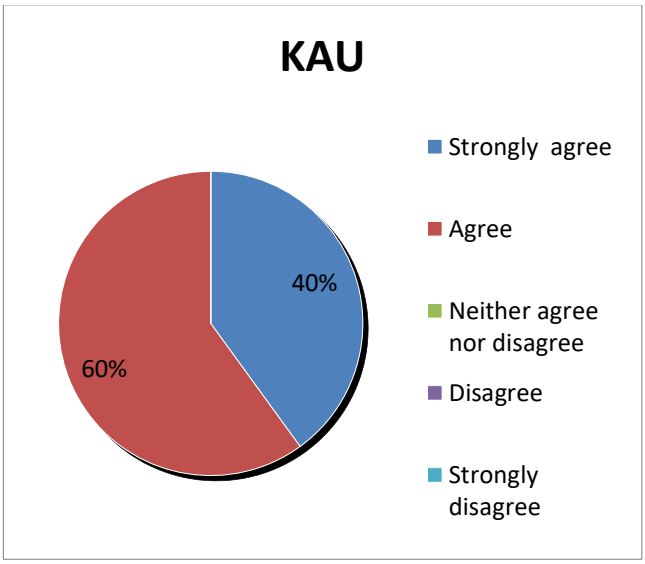
Respondents were then asked to name any universities (Saudi or non-Saudi) they were aware of that offered translation programmes. Only two institutions were mentioned in the Saudi context: KSU (cited by QU1) and Effat University (cited by KAU2, KSU3, PNU). Effat University, Jeddah, is the first private women's university in Saudi Arabia and offers an MSc in Translation Studies which combines training in translation and interpreting. With regard to non-Saudi universities, only one UK institution, namely the University of Manchester, was identified (KSU2). The American Kent State University was also noted (QU1). KAU5 referred to "Universities of Tunisia and France", suggesting that this individual was a specialist in French rather than English.

Rather than identifying specific institutions, KSU3 mentioned three of the states neighbouring Saudi Arabia: UAE, Qatar, and Jordan. UAE University offers a BA in Translation Studies. In Qatar, the Translation and Interpreting Institute at Hamad bin Khalifa University in Doha offers two separate postgraduate qualifications: an MA in Translation Studies and an MA in Audiovisual Translation. Jordan also provides postgraduate programmes in translation in a number of its universities, including the University of Yarmouk and the University of Petra.

Although six of the non-KAU respondents had gained postgraduate qualifications studying in institutions outside Saudi Arabia, only one of these institutions was named in the responses to this item. This lack of mention of non-Saudi institutions may be due to the fact that as postgraduate or doctoral students, the respondents

had limited contact with or knowledge of the undergraduate programmes at these institutions or did not follow courses specifically on translation.

In the final question in this section, Q23, the focus moved to respondents' opinion on the extent to which students should be included when planning the content of a translation course.



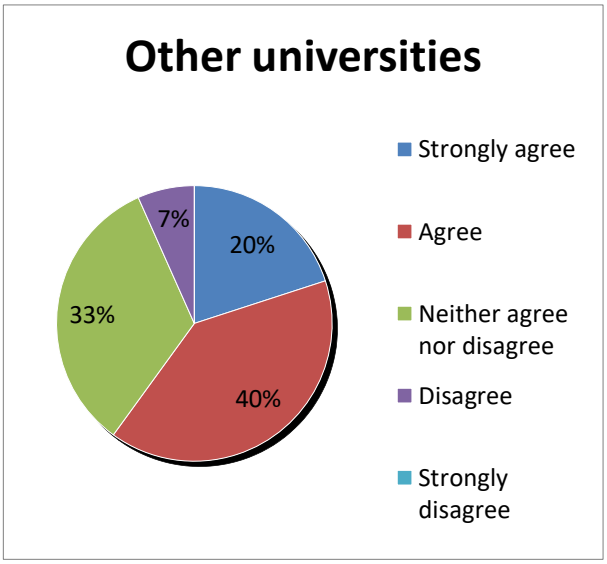


Figure 5.19: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Opinion on student participation in curriculum planning

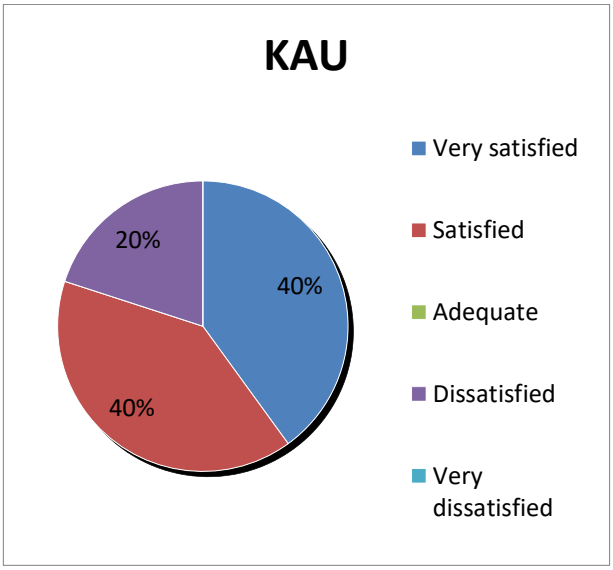
All five KAU respondents were in agreement to a greater or lesser degree that students should play a role in the process of planning translation module content. Most respondents from the other universities were also in favour of this suggestion. Closer examination of results from KSU and KAR showed that four of the five KSU respondents had no strong feelings about this issue. While KAR respondents were mostly in favour of this proposal, the only individual to voice disagreement (KAR1) was based at this institution.

In fact, according to the NCAAA (2015: 6) framework, "Stakeholders should have substantial involvement in planning and review processes with feedback regularly obtained, analysed, and responded to", and students are specifically named as one of the stakeholder groups that should be involved in course planning.

5.3 Methods of Teaching and Assessment in Translation Modules

The third and final section of the questionnaire focused mainly on gauging respondents' levels of satisfaction in relation to methods of teaching and assessment used in current translation modules. However, this section also gathered information about continuing professional development opportunities available to respondents.

Q24 was intended to assess respondents' levels of satisfaction with the methods currently employed in their department for teaching translation.



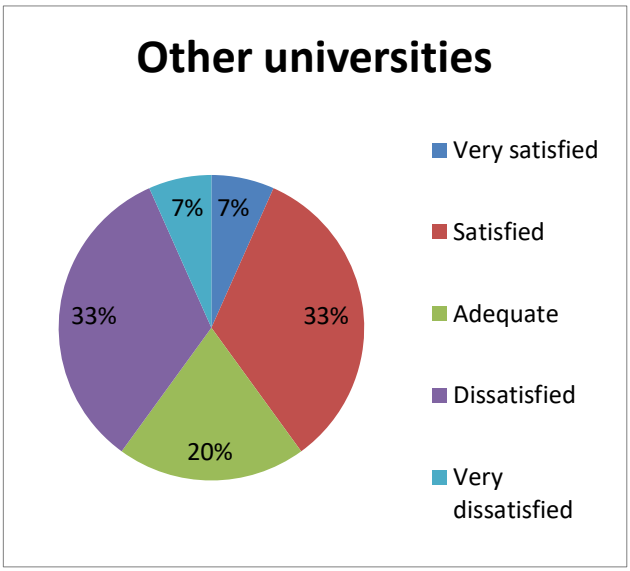


Figure 5.19: KAU vs. other universities: level of satisfaction with current translation teaching methods

In the case of KAU, four of the staff were satisfied to a greater or lesser degree with current teaching methods. Only one individual (KAU2) expressed dissatisfaction. The responses were somewhat different for the other institutions, with 33% (*n*=6) of the fifteen respondents indicating their lack of satisfaction with the current state of affairs in their department. The profile for KAR suggested a significant difference of opinion among staff. Namely, three of the seven

respondents were satisfied (KAR1, KAR3, KAR5) while another three were dissatisfied to a greater or less degree (KAR6, KAR7, KAR2).

Respondents were also asked to follow up their responses to this Likert-type question by stating the reasons why they felt this way about the teaching methods used currently for teaching translation; these written responses merit closer examination here. In the case of KAU, the only respondent who expressed dissatisfaction with the current teaching methods failed to provide any detailed explanation for this opinion, simply stating that the methods "aren't sufficient" (KAU2). Although KAU3 expressed general satisfaction with the teaching methods, this respondent added, "I just wish to use other textbooks to cover more strategies and approaches to translation and to provide a wider range of translation drills". Respondents from other universities expressed their satisfaction on various grounds, such as the course "covers the essentials" (KAR3), provides "sufficient training" (KSU5), and fulfils "the majority of learning outcomes" (KAR5). KSU2 added that "students' feedback is mostly positive". KAR1 commented on the fact that "Students are taught in various environments according to the needs of the courses, e.g. language labs". Although PNU1 was the only individual to express full satisfaction with the teaching methods used by the department, this respondent did not provide any explanation.

Those who expressed dissatisfaction with current teaching methods produced quite specific reasons for their opinion. KSU3 highlighted the fact that "A top-down

method is predominately used", suggesting a teacher-centred delivery model. Technology was mentioned by two respondents at different institutions. KAR6 was concerned about the lack of use of technology, while QU1 complained about the lack of "technical support". TU1 thought there was an overemphasis on theory at the expense of practice. The only respondent who expressed strong disagreement with the status quo felt there was a lack of consistency in the current methodological approach which could prove confusing to undergraduate students (KAR2).

Although KSU4 chose not to express strong feelings either way about current methods, this respondent was critical of the current methods in the written response, noting that "There are no clear criteria for evaluation". The issue of teaching methods is discussed further in Chapter 8.

Q26 was an open-ended item designed to elicit the range of methods currently used for teaching translation. These responses were collated, and the results are presented in Table 5.14.

Table 5.14: Range of methods currently used for teaching translation

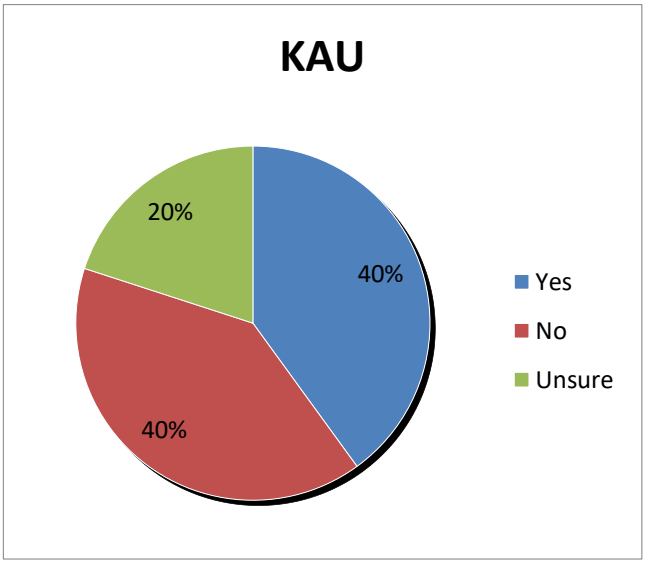
	KAU	**KAR**	**KSU**	**TU**	**PNU**	**QU**
Textbook	✓					
Explanation	✓					
Drills	✓					
PowerPoint presentations	✓					
Direct method	✓					
Traditional method	✓					
Communicative language teaching	✓					
Workshops		✓	✓		✓	✓
Discussions	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Group work		✓	✓		✓	✓
Timed tasks			✓			
Projects			✓			
Peer review			✓			
Autonomous learning			✓			
Lectures		✓				
Classwork				✓		
Translation assignments covering diverse fields				✓		

The most frequently mentioned methods were workshops, discussions, and group work. It has been noted that these three methods were included in the wording of the item, so the wording may have influenced some of the responses that were provided. However, this influence was not the case for KSU and KAU respondents. KSU appears to have had some of the most innovative methods, including timed tasks (KSU2), projects (KSU3), peer review (KSU3), and autonomous learning (KSU5). In the case of KAU, staff respondents tended to interpret 'method' in a broader sense, referring to pedagogical approaches with a specific theoretical underpinning, including direct method (KAU2), traditional method (KAU5), and communicative language teaching (KAU2, KAU4).

This matrix of the responses suggests that KSU may have a more innovative approach to the teaching and learning process. Conversely, in the KAU sample, staff teaching in the same course referred to using both the traditional method (KAU5) and to communicative language teaching (KAU2, KAU4); these contrasting approaches in the classroom might cause confusion for students.

The next item, Q27, was intended to elicit whether the departments surveyed had a systematic review process that was used to evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of their teaching methods in relation to translation module objectives. A follow-up question was used to determine the type of evaluation methods used and their frequency.



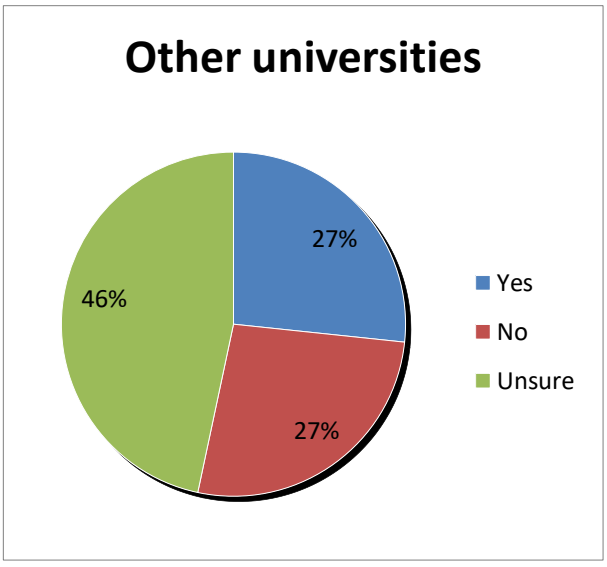


Figure 5.20: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Evaluation of teaching methods

Results for this item (Figure 5.21) suggest that perhaps respondents either misinterpreted the question that was being asked or were genuinely not aware of evaluation processes in their departments. In the case of KAU, two individuals responded 'yes' (KAU3, KAU4), two responded 'no' (KAU1, KAU2), and one was unsure (KAU5). This response profile is unusual for an item which is essentially requesting factual information. More detailed analysis of the responses for other universities surveyed shows unusual patterns for these institutions, too. The pattern for KAR was similar to that for KAU, with equal numbers claiming that an evaluation system was/was not in place. Moreover, a total of seven of the respondents from the other universities (46% of the sample) stated that they were unsure whether an evaluation system was in place in their department.

Table 5.15: Non-KAU staff: Evaluation of teaching methods

Institution	**Yes**	**No**	**Unsure**
KSU		KSU2, KSU3	KSU1, KSU4, KSU5
KAR	KAR3, KAR6	KAR2, KAR7	KAR1, KAR4, KAR5
PNU	PNU1		
QU	QU1		
TU			TU1

In Q27, when respondents attempted to explain what evaluation methods are used and how frequently these methods are employed, the responses confirmed that most individuals had misinterpreted the item. Several respondents provided examples of methods that were used to evaluate student learning rather than teaching methods (KAU4, KAR3, KAR6, QU1). Only one respondent seemed to have grasped the nature of the information that was being sought; this respondent

explained that "course assessment is required at the end of every semester from both instructor and students" (KAU3). This result suggests that there is, in fact, an evaluation system in operation at KAU, regardless of the responses provided by respondents at this institution. It remains unclear whether an evaluation system is also in operation elsewhere.[28]

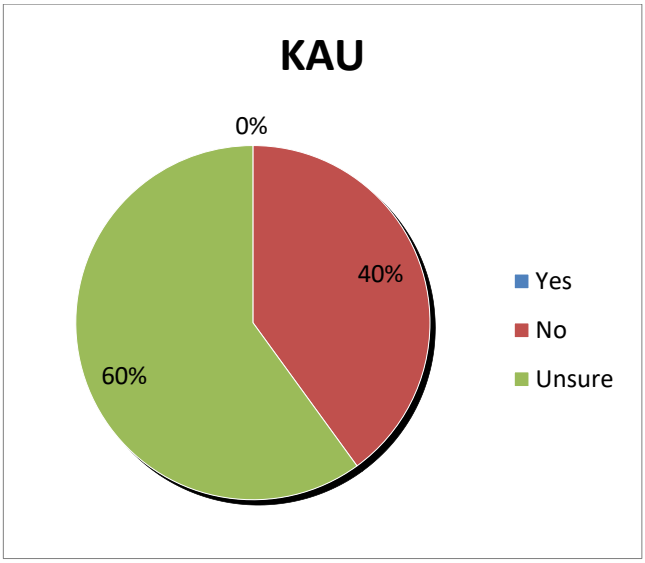
Again, the official position on this issue of evaluating courses per the NCAAA framework is as follows: "Regular evaluations of quality must be undertaken within each course based on valid evidence and appropriate benchmarks and plans for improvement made and implemented" (NCAAA, 2015: 13). Responses by respondents tended to suggest that quality assurance procedures have yet to be fully embedded within these Saudi institutions.

Given that respondents appeared to have had difficulties in interpreting Q27, it is not surprising that very few responses were provided for Q28, since this item continued with the same theme of module/course evaluation. Namely, Q28 aimed to establish how the department uses the results of this evaluation to ensure that learning outcomes are achieved and students improve their skills. Of the six responses provided (KAU1, KAU3, KAU4, KAR3, KAR6, QU1), only one was relevant

[28] According to Al-Jarf (2015: 1), at King Saud University in Riyadh, "Instructors of all levels are annually evaluated by college administrators. They are also evaluated by students enrolled in every course they teach [using] standard evaluation forms". Despite this claim, responses here from KSU staff suggested that staff were unclear about current procedures, highlighting once again the difference between having a set of quality assurance procedures that are meant to be followed and having procedures that are firmly embedded within the institution, understood, and actually followed by all staff.

to the intended focus of the question. KAU3 noted that the departmental course assessment required at the end of every semester provided "suggestions for improving the course from both perspectives: instructors' and students'".

The next two items were designed to provide information about whether teaching staff had access to opportunities for undertaking professional training relating to translation, either in-house or through externally organised activities such as workshops or conferences.



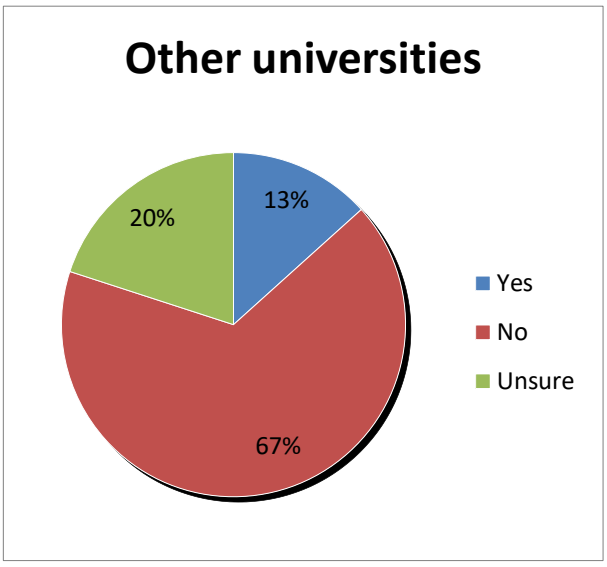
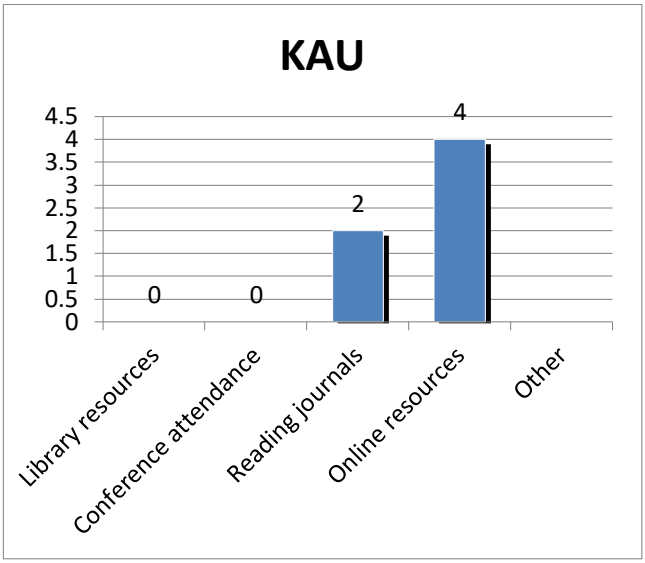


Figure 5.21: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Opportunities for professional translation training

Results for this item are once again somewhat difficult to interpret. In the case of KAU, three of the five respondents were unsure whether these opportunities existed. The other two respondents stated 'no'. Since none of the respondents answered 'yes', this result suggests that these opportunities are not routinely offered to members of staff. A similar situation seems present at KSU, TU, and QU. The PNU respondent was unsure. With respect to KAR, while five respondents stated that these opportunities were not available, KAR1 and KAR7 believed that they were.

Again, it is possible that, given the profile of the sample for the other universities, (a) these opportunities are only offered to more experienced staff, (b) staff who have been at the institution longer are more aware of these opportunities, or (c) respondents interpreted this item differently. Only one respondent from KAR provided an explanatory comment in relation to professional training offered to staff. KAR1, who had stated that training opportunities were available, commented, "The Head of Department refers staff to any translation events offered in Saudi Arabia".

The next item, Q29, provided insights into the different ways used by respondents to keep themselves updated on current developments in teaching and learning in translation studies.



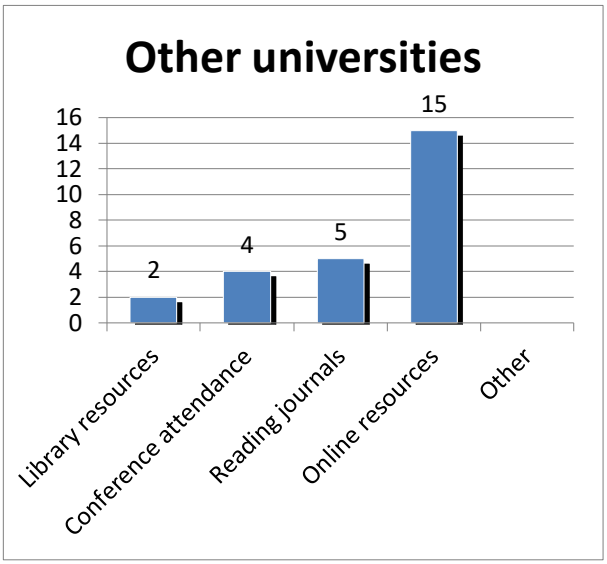


Figure 5.22: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Keeping up to date with developments in teaching and learning in translation studies

Staff at KAU used two main ways of updating their knowledge, namely reading journals and using online resources, with the latter being more popular. Online resources also proved to be the most popular method amongst staff at other universities for keeping up to date with developments in the field, with all respondents stating that they used online resources. Three of the five respondents from KSU said that they attended conferences for this purpose (KSU2, KSU3, KSU5).

According to the NCAAA (2015: 6) framework, "A good educational institution is a learning organization". Thus, "Teaching and other staff involved in the program must be committed to improving both their own performance and the quality of the program as a whole" (NCAAA, 2015: 6). No formal procedures seem to be in place for ensuring that all teaching staff have access to continuing professional development. At best, not all staff are aware of these procedures. Therefore, important aspects of the NCAAA framework are still not being fully implemented across Saudi institutions. This lack of continuing professional development procedures has significant implications for quality assurance and levels of academic achievement in Saudi higher education. Since it appears to be a recurrent feature of some of the staff responses, continuing professional development merits consideration in the discussion chapter (i.e. Chapter 8). Changes to provision must be firmly embedded within a departmental and institutional framework in order to ensure that these changes are fit for purpose and remain so.

In Q31, respondents were asked to rate their students' proficiency in Arabic–English translation upon graduation using a five-point scale, where 1 represents Very Poor and 5 represents Excellent, as shown below:

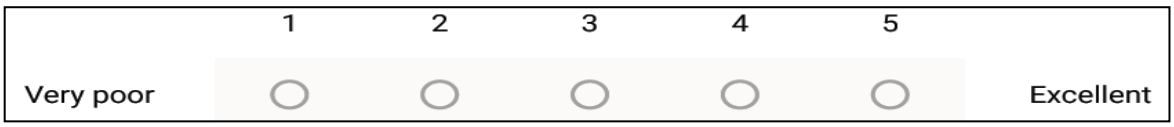
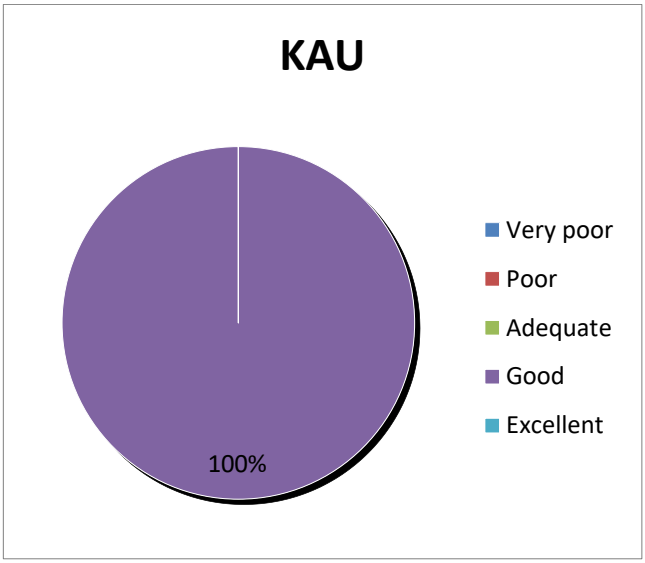


Figure 5.23: Five-point scale used for rating graduates' translation proficiency

This item offered insight into staff's evaluation of the perceived effectiveness of the programme offered by their institution.



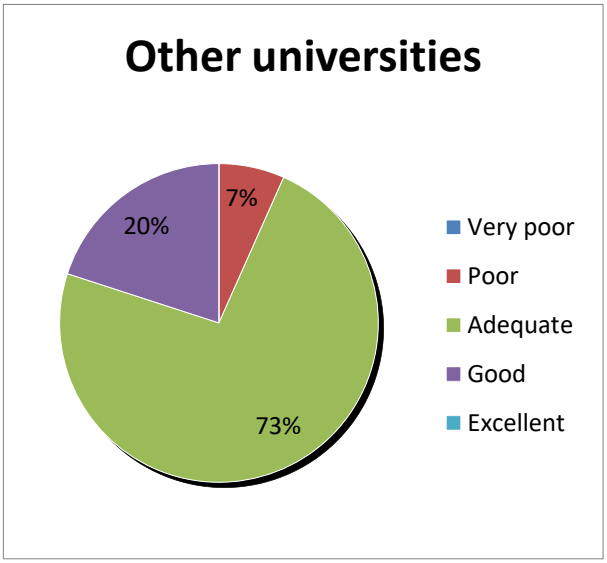


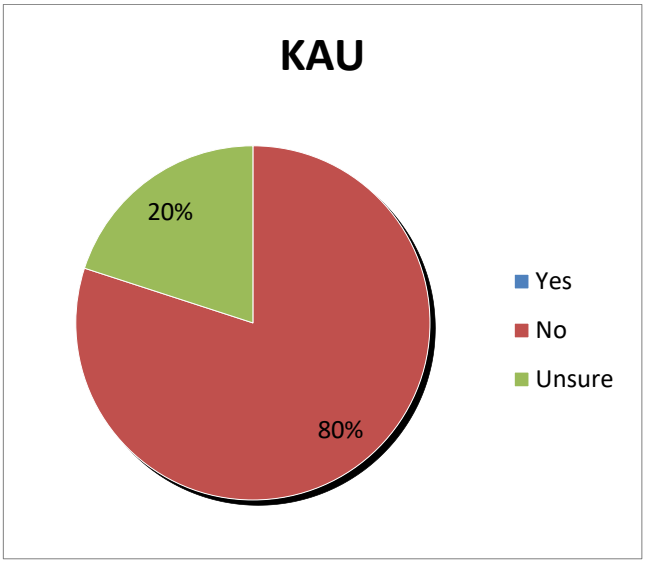
Figure 5.24: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Rating of student proficiency in Arabic–English translation at end of programme

All five KAU respondents evaluated their students' proficiency in Arabic–English translation upon graduation as a '4' on the five-point scale, and thus evaluated this element of their programme as effective. In the case of the other universities, 11 of the 15 respondents chose to rate their students' performance in this skill as a '3' on the same scale. Only three respondents selected '4' on the scale (KSU2, KAR3, PNU1), and a single respondent selected '2' (KAR6) (see Figure 5.25).

One of the difficulties about interpreting responses here is knowing how respondents chose to understand the mid-point (labelled '3') on the five-point scale, since only the meaning of the extremes of the spectrum were specified. This mid-point could have been viewed as merely 'acceptable' or as 'good'.

Although a follow-up item to Q31 asked respondents who had answered '2 = Poor' or '1 = Very Poor' to specify their students' weaknesses, the only individual who selected '2' (KAR6) did not provide any further information.

The focus then shifted to the opportunities, such as internships or practical training courses, that the surveyed departments offered to students interested in following a career in translation.



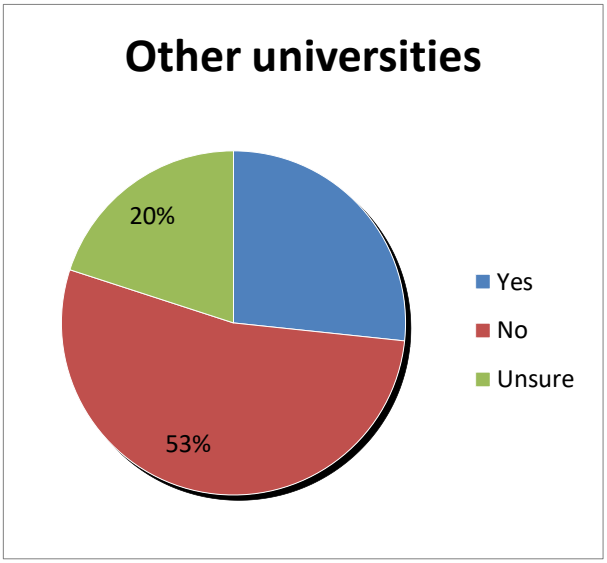
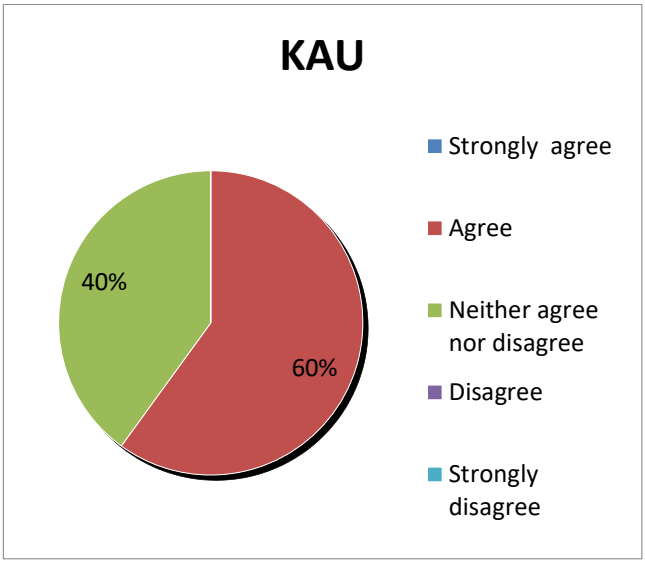


Figure 5.26: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Availability of internships or practical training courses for students

Results for KAU show that the department does not currently offer any internships or practical training courses to its students. With regard to the other universities, more detailed analysis of the individual responses appears to confirm that this absence of opportunities is also the case at KAR, QU, and TU. Although one KSU respondent claimed that these opportunities did not exist for students (KSU3), three others stated that they did (KSU2, KSU4, KSU5), and all three of these respondents

provided further details about the opportunities available. At KSU, this element of the course is referred to as "Field training" (KSU5). Students can undertake this practical training in any institution that requires translation services or has translation departments (KSU4). Thus, the training can take place at public sector organisations such as government agencies or social services institutions or at private sector companies (KSU2). The respondent from PNU stated that PNU's department offered internships or practical training courses to students but did not offer any explanatory details as requested. This area needs more focused research in the future to assess the pros and cons of incorporating such opportunities into a translation programme, particularly in the Saudi context. (For a further discussion of what such future research could look like, see Chapter 9.)

The penultimate questionnaire item, Q33, asked respondents to provide their personal opinions as to whether the graduates of their course are ready to start a career in translation.



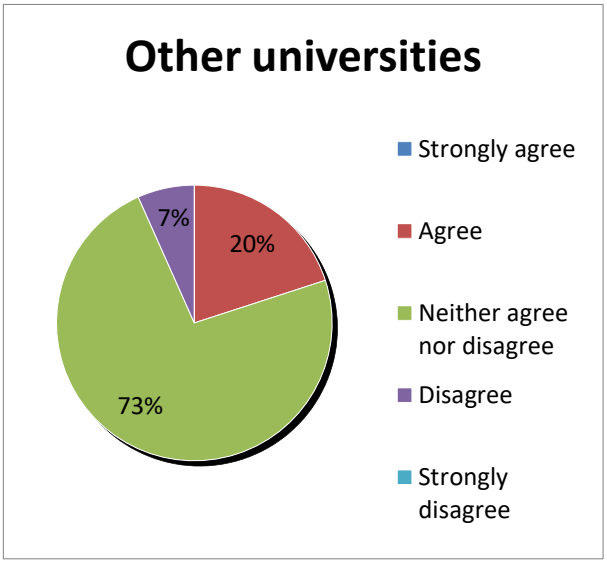


Figure 5.25: KAU vs. non-KAU staff: Graduate preparedness for translation career

As Figure 5.27 shows, while three of the KAU respondents thought that their graduates would be ready to start a career in translation, the remaining two did not feel they could express any firm opinion on their students' preparedness. Interestingly, the staff from the other universities took the same position, with 11 of the 15 respondents choosing not to comment either positively or negatively on the state of preparedness of their students for entry into the translation profession. A

total of just three respondents from two of the institutions surveyed (KSU2, KSU5, PNU1) thought that their students would be ready to start working as professional translators. A single individual from the sample did not think that KAR graduates would be ready to work professionally in the translation field (KAR4). Clearly, these opinions are influenced by each lecturer's personal views on what the current market needs are and what skills and competences are needed for professional translation.

It is unclear why so many respondents from other universities chose the neutral option in reference to this particular item. This neutrality could indicate that the respondents did not feel competent to express an opinion on students' preparedness in relation to a translation career, perhaps due to insufficient knowledge about the exact requirements of this profession. Equally, it is possible that respondents thought that choosing this option reflected the fact that some of their graduates are ready to enter the translating profession while others are not.

These results are useful when compared with the results for the item on the student questionnaire that asked respondents if they were planning on continuing their studies (see Section 6.2.4); this comparison provides some insights into how students and graduates judge their own linguistic competency and employability (see Section 7.3). The final open-ended item on the questionnaire, Q34, gave respondents the chance to provide suggestions for (a) improving the programme and (b) improving students' translation skills. However, since several of the comments made by respondents were effectively repeated in both sections, here

these two parts of the item have been collated by university rather than by section, i.e. by (a) and (b). No comments were provided for PNU, and only one suggestion was made by a single KSU respondent.

The sample of KAU respondents thought that the following would improve the course:

- Provide other textbooks and resources (KAU3).
- Increase students' exposure to English and Arabic by providing more practice (KAU3).
- Offer translation at different levels from beginners to advanced (KAU4, KAU5).

Only one respondent from KSU made a comment relating to this item, emphasising that there was a need to "draw a clear line between teaching English and teaching translation" (KSU3).

The respondents from TU and from QU both highlighted the need to

- increase the time provided for translation practice and
- improve students' language (TU1, QU1).

It is not possible to ascertain in this case whether the reference made here to 'language' means the students' second language (English), their first language (Arabic), or both.

Respondents from KAR were the most prolific and wide ranging in their comments on this final questionnaire item. The need to increase the practical and vocationally

oriented elements of the course was highlighted by several respondents (KAR3, KAR4, KAR5, KAR6), with specific suggestions including the following:

- Provide internships (KAR3).
- Provide more workshops (KAR3, KAR4).
- Extend provision of technical training programmes (KAR4, KAR5).
- Introduce a final-year translation project (KAR4).

KAR3 also described an idea for providing students with translation practice, suggesting having students produce a weekly newspaper containing "interesting, catchy and intellectual articles". The students could choose and translate the newspaper, then share the translation with fellow students from different departments across the campus.

Two of the suggestions that were made were more general. KAR6 thought that it would be useful to raise the standards for admission to the course; however, the respondent included no specific details about whether this recommendation referred to having applicants achieve a particular level in English or a higher GPA more generally. KAR4 felt that the department needed "to develop course LOs". Unfortunately, in this case, it is difficult to interpret what the respondent meant. The abbreviation 'Los' could be intended to refer to 'learning objectives' or 'learning outcomes'. Like several of the respondents from other universities, KAR1 highlighted students' lack of competence in Modern Standard Arabic, their mother tongue, rather than students' standard of English. The same respondent explained how the

department intended to address this issue: "We shall offer specialized courses in Arabic Language to our students in their first level of specialization" (KAR1).[29] A final comment related more specifically to professional development for teaching staff, with KAR1 emphasising that there was a need to "create a research environment in the department".

From the questionnaire responses of the Saudi university staff teaching EFL and TS courses, several suggestions have been specified to improve the translation skills academically. That is, the staff through the open-ended questions has clearly specified the need for offering a final year project, improving technical skills, improving the translation standards academically and also offering more workshops to make the students as future translators equipped with the required skills and knowledge. However, to ensure the representativeness of the data collected from the staff, this study has also identified the actual expectations of the translation industry in Saudi Arabia through data collection from employers using interviews as given in Chapter 7. Comparing the data collected from the students, graduates, staff and the employers in Chapter 8 can help in better understanding the actual expectations of the translating industry from the translators and the way staff are preparing their students as the future translators for this Saudi translating industry.

[29] This comment may seem somewhat odd, but it should be remembered that Arabic is a diglossic language, i.e. it has two distinct forms. Modern Standard Arabic is the written variant used for communication purposes in formal contexts and acts as a common language for all Arabs. In addition, all Arabic speakers also use a different localised spoken variant for everyday communication. There are significant differences between these forms in terms of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary.

5.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to present the results of the 33-item English-language questionnaire that was used to survey a sample of staff from six Saudi universities where translation is taught as part of EFL/TS programme. The focus of this research is centred on KAU. However, the analysis of the results from other institutions and the opinions from staff who teach at other Saudi universities serves as a useful point of comparison. The comparative analysis showed that staff of KAU is more aware of the content in the translation courses when compared to other university staff. From comparative analysis, 'discussion' is the only type of teaching method that is common between KAU and other universities. However, some similarities were identified in terms of emphasizing the need for including students during course formulation and confidence that their students can look for a job in translation. This comparative analysis also provides additional insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the provision in translation courses across the Kingdom and helps to identify those attitudes and factors that may facilitate or impede change within higher education language departments in Saudi Arabia. To ensure the representativeness of the data, these results are compared where possible throughout the following chapters with the results of the student and graduate questionnaires as well as the employers' interviews. The broader implications of these compared results are discussed in depth in Chapter 8.

6 Data Analysis: Student Questionnaires

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the questionnaire that was used to survey the opinions of a sample of students studying EFL and translation from Saudi universities (see Appendix 6). The twelve universities included in the sample are identified in Table 6.1.

The main aims of the student questionnaire were as follows:

- To establish what students perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of the current provision at the university they attend.
- To gauge students' attitudes towards the way translation is currently taught and towards the possibility of introducing changes in the way translation is taught.
- To gauge students' attitudes towards increasing the vocational orientation of translation courses.

As with the staff questionnaire, a cross-institutional comparative dimension was introduced into the research by including students from a range of Saudi universities where translation module is taught as part of the EFL or TS degrees. A full list of the universities represented in the questionnaire sample can be found in Table 6.1.

Responses to the questionnaire from students based on the KAU campus at Rabigh were also received. However, since the translation provision offered there differs to that offered in the courses taught at the main KAU campus, their responses were not grouped together with those from participants studying at KAU in Jeddah. This separate grouping ensured that any trends specific to the KAU course in Jeddah would be more easily noticed. The representativeness of the data collected from the student questionnaire is further ensured by comparing it with the data collected from a different group, which involves the group of graduates from Saudi universities as given in Chapter 7.

The analysis began with processing all the questionnaire responses into two separate batches. The first batch consisted entirely of questionnaires completed by students at KAU. All the questionnaires returned by students attending other Saudi universities, including KAR, were processed together as the second batch. Each batch, as a separate set, was then analysed statistically for comparative purposes to identify any major differences between the responses from students at KAU and the responses expressed by students attending other institutions. This comparison made it possible to identify any distinctive strength in provision at Saudi universities other than KAU. It also helped to provide an evidence-based foundation for any recommendations regarding how to improve the delivery and outcomes of translation courses at KAU, with the long-term aim of producing graduates who are better prepared to cope with the current needs of the Saudi translation market.

With regard to the choice of language for the questionnaires, the items in the student questionnaire were written in Arabic to ensure comprehension. Students were also permitted to respond to open-ended items in either Arabic or English; the purpose was to encourage completion, as writing English responses may have proved too difficult for some students. Many of the responses received were in Arabic, all of which needed to be translated by myself before manual analysis could begin. Responses to the open-ended questions for the student questionnaires varied in length from brief phrases or single sentences to full paragraphs, the latter indicating that some students dedicated considerable thought to reflecting on their experience as learners. Post-translation, in analysing the responses generated by the open-ended questions, I first read once through all the answers. Any answers that did not appear to make sense in the context because students had misunderstood/misinterpreted the question were excluded. Any answers for which students had responded with phrases that simply repeated part of the wording of the questionnaire item were excluded as well.

The results of the closed-ended items of the questionnaire are presented here following the order of the two questionnaire sections. These results are presented in the form of the frequency of the student responses using the discrete statistics. The formula used to calculate the percentage of responses is given in Equation 8

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{n}{\sum n} \times 100 \quad (8)$$

The equation above (8) which is used to calculate the percentage of the students is same as the formula used to calculate the average value. This formula is used to calculate the percentages mentioned in each of the charts in this section. The value of the 'total number of students in the questionnaire' is 134 as 134 completed questionnaires have been received.

The first section focused on personal information, such as age and university attended, as well as on respondents' reasons for choosing the degree course they were studying and their career aspirations. This first section aimed to provide insight into the profile of the sample of respondents to evaluate the sample's overall representativeness. In the second section, the items related specifically to aspects of the respective translation courses/modules in the departments represented. The items in this second section began with students' expectations of these courses/modules. The remaining items in the section were designed to elicit students' opinion on aspects of the translation modules they had completed. The responses to these two sections are used to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the current provision across the institutions surveyed, with a specific focus on content and methods of delivery and on assessing the institutions' degree of vocational orientation. This student perspective is also used to complement the responses from the staff questionnaires.

6.2 The Profile of the Student Sample Surveyed

6.2.1 University profile

A total of 134 completed questionnaires were received, consisting of 21 questions and representing 12 Saudi institutions of higher education in total. Of these replies, 85 were from respondents studying at KAU in Jeddah, the university which forms the major focus of this research. The other 49 student respondents in the sample represented the Saudi universities shown in Table 6.1. Two students did not identify the institution they attended. The overall profile of the sample of student respondents can be seen in Figure 6.1.

Table 6.1: Universities represented in the questionnaire sample

ID	University	No.	Funding	Location
KAU	King Abdulaziz University	85	Public	Jeddah, Western Province
AIU	Al-Imam University	10	Public	Riyadh, Central Province
JU	Jeddah University	1	Public	Jeddah, Western Province
KAR	King Abdulaziz University	8	Public	Rabigh, Western Province
KKU	King Khalid University	1	Public	Abha, Southern Province
KSU	King Saud University	11	Public	Riyadh, Central Province
OTH	Other (unidentified)	2	Unknown	Unknown
PNU	Princess Nora University	8	Public	Riyadh, Central Province
QU	Qassim University	2	Public	Qassim, Central Province
SEU	Saudi Electronic University	3	Public	Riyadh, Central Province
TAU	Taiba University	2	Public	Medina, Western Province
UQU	Umm Alqura	1	Public	Makkah, Western Province
TOTAL OF RESPONDENTS		**134**		

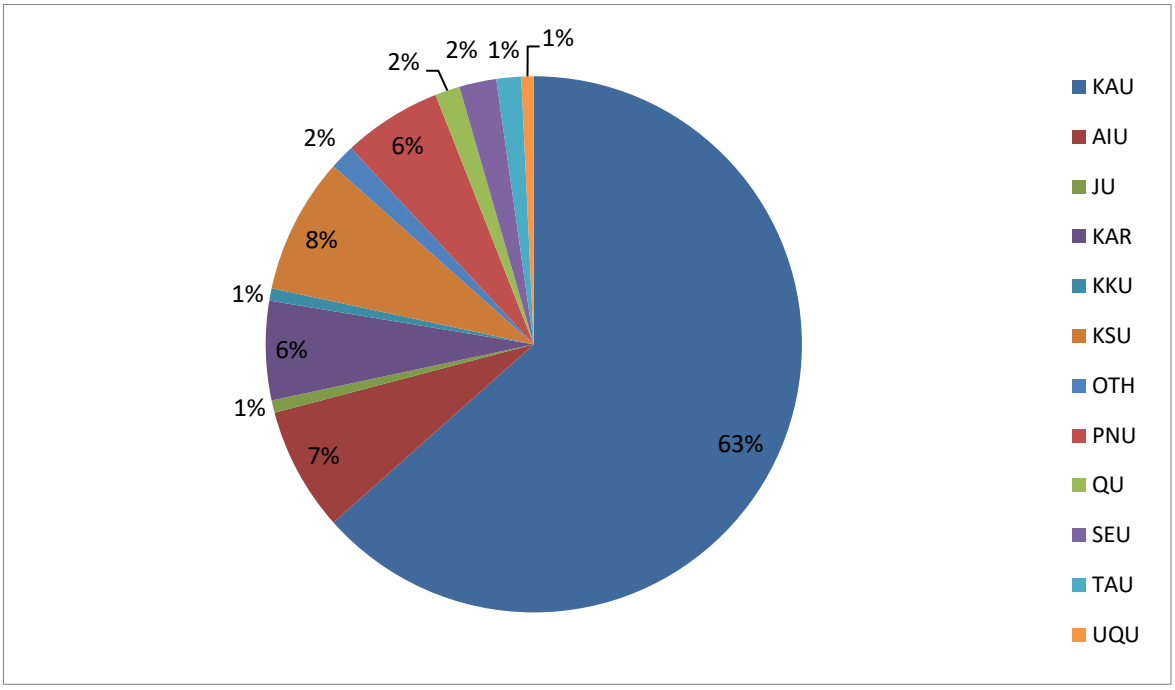


Figure 6.1: Profile of respondents by university

All of the universities are publicly funded by the Saudi government. Geographically, the students in the sample predominantly attend universities situated in the large cities of the Central and Western Provinces; only one student represents the more rural Southern Province. Although Saudi Electronic University is based in the Saudi capital, it aims to cater to students from across the Arabian Peninsula and beyond. As anticipated, the largest number of respondents (63%, *n*=85) came from KAU.

6.2.2 Age profile

Within the sample, the youngest respondent was 18, the oldest 35. The majority of respondents were aged between 20 and 23 when they completed the questionnaire; this age range suggests that the sample represented students at various stages of their undergraduate study. It is relatively unusual to find adult learners outside this age range in the Saudi university system. The 35-year-old

student was registered at Saudi Electronic University, a new institution which received its charter in 2011. It specialises in providing more flexible e-learning and distance education with a strong emphasis on producing graduates to meet the requirements of the labour market (SEU: online).

6.2.3 Reasons for choosing current degree course

Students were asked to list their reasons for choosing their current degree course. The recruitment letter for the current study made it clear that, in order to be eligible to participate, respondents needed to be enrolled in degree courses which either focused on Arabic–English translation or contained a substantial number of modules relating to Arabic–English translation. Respondents' experience with such modules may have occurred at different stages of their university study or for varying lengths of time. However, it can be assumed that all of the respondents had at least some level of exposure to teaching in this subject area. At KAU, EFL is considered to be an English course with obligatory translation components.

Since the respondents for the questionnaire were self-selected, their choice of degree course seems likely to have been informed by a personal interest in their subject of study. This basis for choosing their course proved to be the case for the vast majority of respondents from both KAU (88%) and other universities (88%) (see Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3).

With regard to KAU students (see Figure 6.2), most responses suggested that students had positive reasons for their choice of university course. Some 46% of respondents (*n*=39) expressed an interest in or love for English. A further 12% (*n*=10) stated that their choice of degree course had been motivated by their interest in learning about languages and cultures. Other students were more specific about the elements of study they most enjoyed, highlighting a love of literature (4%), a passion for translation (8%), or a desire to communicate with others (2%). Another 7% (*n*=6) focused on their degree course as a pathway to job opportunities or specifically as a means to a future career. The course was seen as a means of improving their English by 9% of students (*n*=8).

Finally, 12% of respondents (*n*=10) were more neutral about their degree course, stating they had chosen this course either on the grounds of convenience or because they felt it was the only choice they had.

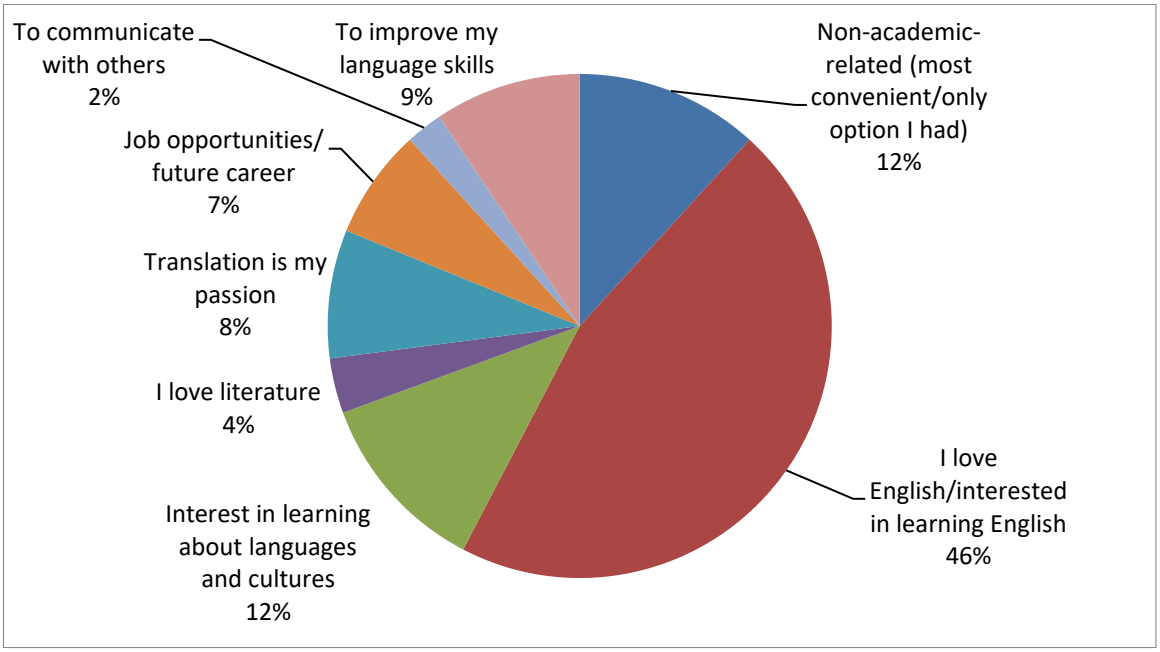


Figure 6.2: KAU students: Reasons for choosing current degree course

With regard to students from the other Saudi universities represented, for 23% of respondents (*n*=11) the choice of degree course was motivated by a general interest in learning about languages and cultures. The perception of a degree in English as broad or interdisciplinary proved attractive to 8% (*n*=4). Another group focused more specifically on their enjoyment of studying the language itself, with 12% (*n*=6) mentioning that they loved English or were interested in the language. The most frequently cited reason for the choice of degree course was a love of, interest in, or even passion for translation, with 29% (*n*=14) specifically highlighting this element of their studies. 16% (*n*=8) stated that they had been motivated by the job opportunities in the translation field and saw translation as a future career.

As with KAU students, 12% of non-KAU students (*n*=6) stated that they had chosen their degree courses for non-academic related reasons due to convenience or lack of other options.

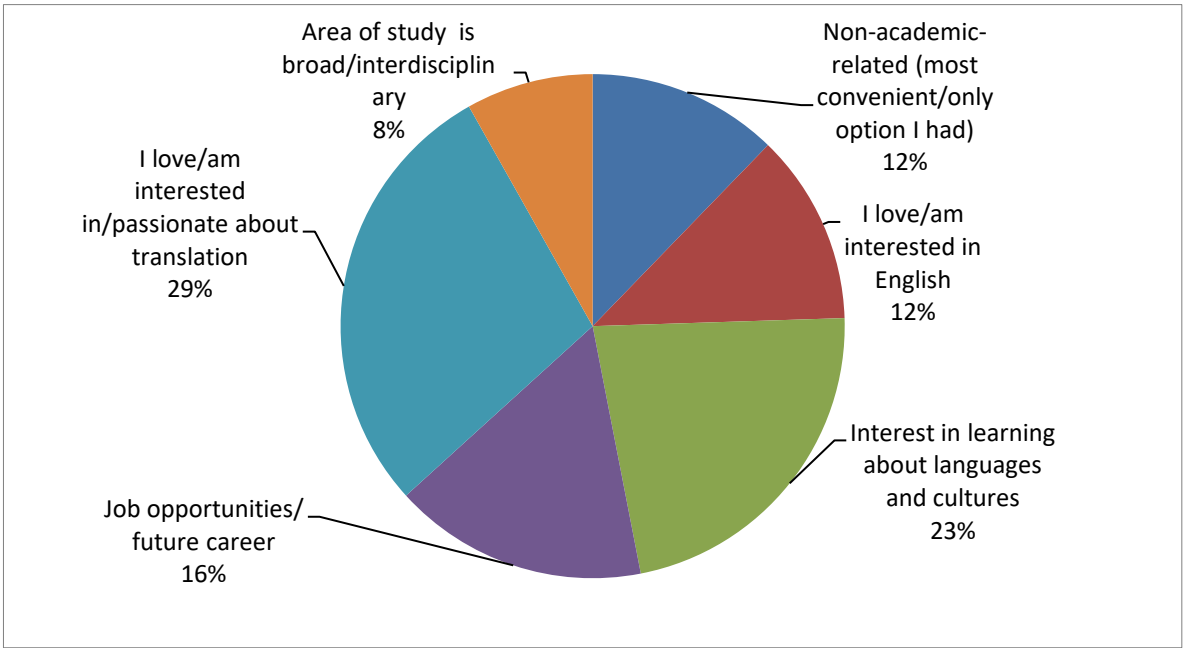


Figure 6.3: Non-KAU students: Reasons for choosing current degree course

In a study on motivation and undergraduate degree choice in UK university students, Anya Skatova and Eamonn Ferguson (2014) identified four key reasons behind students' choice: (1) career concerns, (2) intrinsic interest in a particular subject, (3) an opportunity to help others, or (4) the perception that this degree would be an easy option. Their results showed differences in terms of both discipline area and gender. Those students opting to study degrees in the arts and humanities principally tended to make this choice on the basis of intrinsic interest or because they perceived the area to be an easy subject to study. Concern about a future career was not a major motivator. However, the researchers also found significant gender differences, with women tending to choose their degree course chiefly for interest in the subject and for pro-social

motives, i.e. because they viewed the course as a means of helping others and engaging in activities that would benefit society.

Given Skatova and Ferguson's (2014) findings and the predominantly female composition of the Saudi sample,[30] it is perhaps not surprising that interest in the subject—often expressed in terms of love/passion for English—was cited so frequently by participants as a reason for choosing their degree. The lower mentions of career concerns in this sample could also be attributed in part to conservative interpretations of Islam and patriarchal traditions in which "Saudi women are socially expected to be mothers and housewives, whilst Saudi men are expected to be breadwinners" (Alwedinani, 2016: 39). Saudi-specific factors may also help to explain the fact that 12% of both KAU and non-KAU respondents gave non-academic reasons for their choice of degree course. In her research on gender and subject choice in higher education in Saudi Arabia, Jawaher Alwedinani (2016: 38) found that, although some young women "can resist the patriarchal system depending on their family's attitudes, class and ethnicity", educational and professional choices for most young women are subject to paternal approval for religious and cultural reasons. In addition, other factors such as transport issues can prevent female students from attending their preferred courses.[31]

[30] KAU participants, who make up 63% of the sample, attend a female-only course.
[31] Freedom of movement for Saudi women is restricted by a number of religious, cultural, and financial factors. The lifting of the ban on women driving on 24 June 2018 is likely to facilitate greater mobility.

6.2.4 Students' career aspirations

The next item focused on determining the career aspirations of the sample of Saudi undergraduate students, asking them directly whether they intended to become a translator after graduation. The results are shown in Figure 6.4 and Figure 6.5. Again, given that the students were at different stages of their university studies, for some this item may relate to a decision to be taken imminently while for others it may indicate a long-term ambition.

In the case of KAU, 20% of the respondents (*n*= 17) expressed a firm desire to follow a career in translation after graduating from university. A similar percentage of students (19%, *n*=16) had instead ruled translation out as a possible career option. Well over half of the sample, 61% (*n*=52), indicated that they were still unsure about a future career (see Figure 6.4).

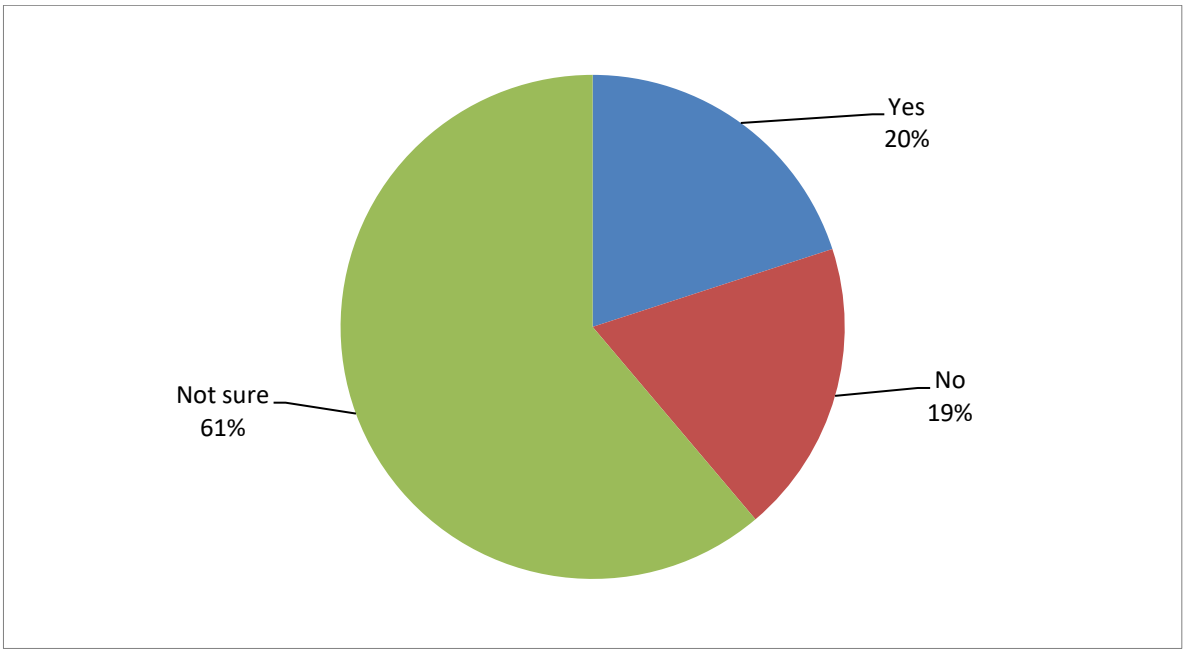


Figure 6.4: KAU students: Are you thinking of becoming a translator after graduation?

The response pattern for this item was quite different for non-KAU students, as Figure 6.5 illustrates. The overwhelming majority of these respondents, 78% (*n*=38), indicated that they were thinking about becoming a translator after completing their degree. A much smaller group comprising 18% was currently undecided (*n*=9). Only 4% (just two individuals) had no intention of pursuing a career in translation following graduation. One of these two students (KSU11S) had indicated in a previous response that the decision to study at KSU had been made for non-academic reasons.

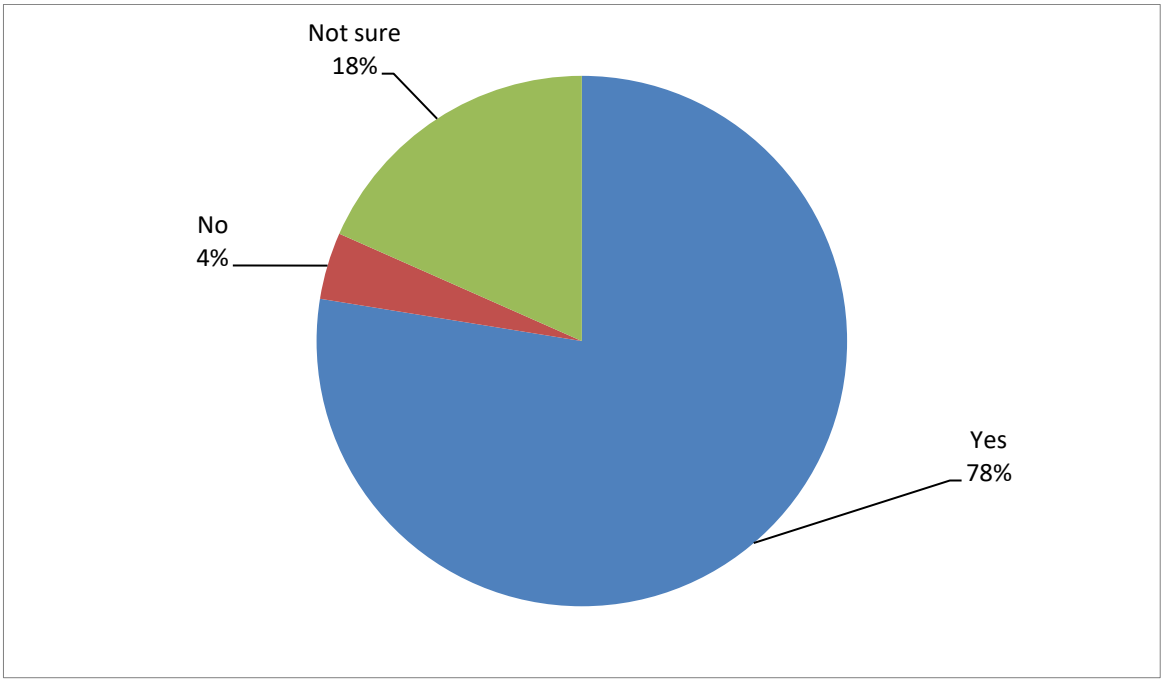


Figure 6.5: Non-KAU students: Are you thinking of becoming a translator after graduation?

The responses for the previous questionnaire item concerning the factors that had originally motivated students' choice of degree course show that only eight of the non-KAU students had specifically mentioned career aspirations as the reason for originally choosing their current course. This low mention of career

aspirations may indicate that the students' experience in these courses has played an important role in influencing their choice of career after graduation (see Section 6.2.3 for more on the impact of motivation on degree choice).

6.3 Student Expectations

In the next questionnaire items, the focus shifts. Students were asked to reflect on their expectations in relation to studying translation. These student expectations naturally impact, to a greater or lesser extent, how the students assess their actual experience of studying translation. Respondents were asked two open-ended questions:

> Q6. What were your expectations about the translation module(s) at the beginning of the course?
>
> Q7. What did you expect to learn in it (them)?

In the case of the KAU sample, seven responses were excluded on the grounds they were unclear (KAU20S, KAU28S, KAU33S, KAU46S, KAU57S, KAU64S, KAU65S, KAU78S, KAU72S, KAU73S). Of the other universities' responses, five were unclear (AIU6S, AIU8S, SEU2S, OTH1, KSU3S). A further five students had simply written "No expectations" (TAU1S, KAR4S, PNU1S, UQU1S, QU1S).

The remaining responses for Q6 and Q7 were then analysed and categorised thematically under headings on the basis of their content. In some of the longer responses, multiple themes were identified. Occasionally, students also included comments about their subsequent experience in the course. Figure 6.6 illustrates an example of how an individual response was analysed.

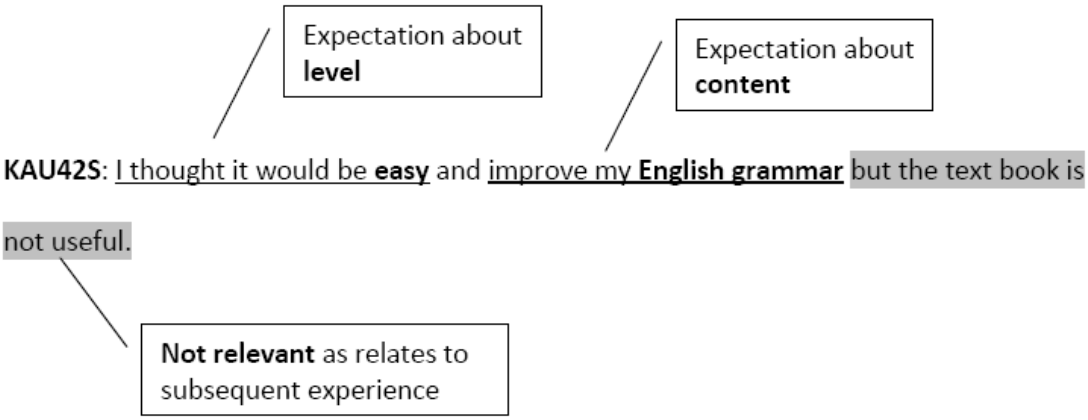


Figure 6.6: Analysis of an individual response

In this example, two types of expectations were identified relating to the translation module: (1) the level of difficulty of the module and (2) the elements that the module would contain. Each expectation was categorised separately. The comment relating to the textbook was not considered relevant in the context of this item, which was specifically focused on student expectations prior to commencing study of translation. This comment was thus ignored.[32]

[32] Concerns about the textbook used in the KAU course emerged as a key theme in a later item in the questionnaire.

After all the themes had been identified for both sets of student responses (KAU and other universities), the themes were re-examined to see if any could be grouped under larger common themes.

Seven themes in total were identified for KAU and non-KAU students:

A Positive expectations

B Negative expectations

C Mixed expectations

D Practice

E Practice and theory

F Way to improve English

G Preparation for professional life

For comparative purposes, the themes were then used to produce the pie chart shown in Figure 6.7.

Q6. What were your expectations about the translation module(s) at the beginning of the course?

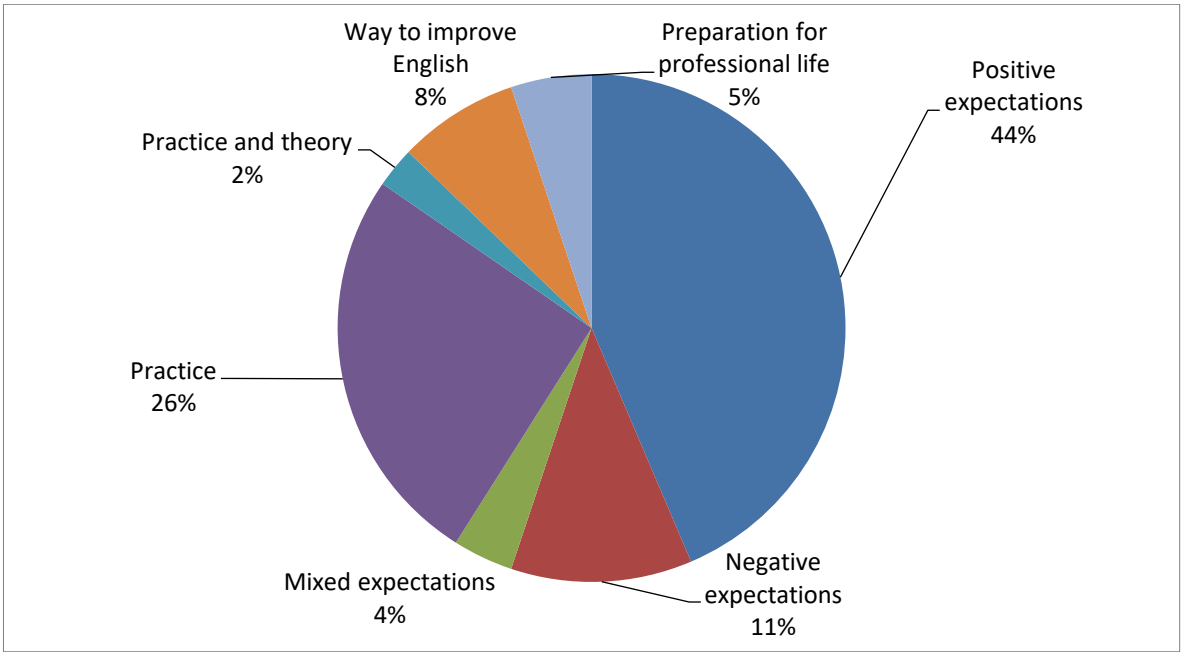


Figure 6.7: KAU students: What were your expectations about the translation module at the beginning of the course?

In the case of KAU students, Themes A, B, and C—positive, negative, and mixed expectations—could be categorised as focused on feelings about the course. These feelings were often linked to respondents' personal assessment of what degree of effort succeeding in the course would require. 44% (*n*=34) of the responses expressed positive feelings towards the course, without offering anything more specific. These responses used descriptors such as 'good', 'excited', 'fun', 'enjoyable', and 'interesting'. The most frequently used term was 'easy' (16 mentions). A smaller group of responses (11%, *n*=9) contained negative terms such as 'difficult', 'hard', 'needs lots of effort', even 'worrying'. 4% (*n*=3) of the students (KAU5S, KAU39S, KAU51S) expressed mixed emotions, all writing the same response: "It will be interesting but difficult". These results are likely based in part on students' previous experiences of

English in general with some elements of translation as a component in secondary school courses and on students' "expectations of how well they will do on the task and how much they value its achievement" (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011: 14).

Themes D (Practice) and E (Practice and theory) focused more on the expected emphasis and content of the course. For example, many more responses indicated students' expectation that a translation module would be exclusively about practice (26%, *n*=20) rather than a combination of practice and theory (2%, *n*=2).

With regard to Theme D, commenting on their expectations about content, students referred to "learning how to translate/interpret" and "being more skilled in translation". Several times 'translation methods' and 'techniques' were mentioned, and many responses employed the adjective 'practical'. Only one student expected that the content might include different text types "such as medical, political etc." (KAU14S). Other responses also mentioned expectations about the language direction students would be expected to work in: both English to Arabic and Arabic to English (KAU38S, KAU25S, KAU37S, KAU47S) or just the latter (KAU52S, KAU55S, KAU74S).

Under Theme E, only 2% (*n*=2) of the responses specifically mentioned the expectation that, at the undergraduate level, translation would involve more

than simply practising language skills. KAU32S expected that there would be "information about translation as an academic discipline", while KAU23S expressed the opinion that treatment of this area would be "comprehensive".

Finally, responses in Themes F (Way to improve English) and G (Preparation for professional life) focused on outcomes of studying translation. These outcomes either concerned improving one's abilities and knowledge in the English language (8%, *n*=6) or preparation for professional life (5%, *n*=4).

It is clear from responses in Theme F that these students considered translation purely as a type of language exercise, expecting that it would "improve grammar" (KAU42S) and expand English vocabulary (KAU69S). In addition, they expected "to translate words and sentences not whole texts" (KAU68S) and to practise word-for-word or literal translation (KAU17S, KAU18S, KAU56S). This reflects the common practice in Saudi Arabia of using translation as a method of testing grammatical knowledge of English.

With regard to Theme G, two students described having expectations that translation would be 'useful' (KAU1S, KAU26S) in this context. Another talked about translation training (KAU9S). However, only one student specifically related translation with "good job opportunities" (KAU44S).

These findings for Theme G can be compared to the findings in Section 6.2.3 about factors that influenced KAU students' choice of degree. Namely, only a very small number of the KAU students viewed a language degree in terms of its utility, i.e., as a means of entering the professional world of translation. This perception was present despite the statement in the *Handbook for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Saudi Arabia* (National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment [NCAAA], 2015: 11) that "One primary objective of any program is that what is learned will be used effectively after graduation". The *Handbook* also suggests that any changes to course content would need to be accompanied by career advice appropriate to the Saudi context, another element highlighted as a necessity by the NCAAA (2015: 16): "Career advice must be provided in relation to occupations related to the fields of study dealt with in the program".

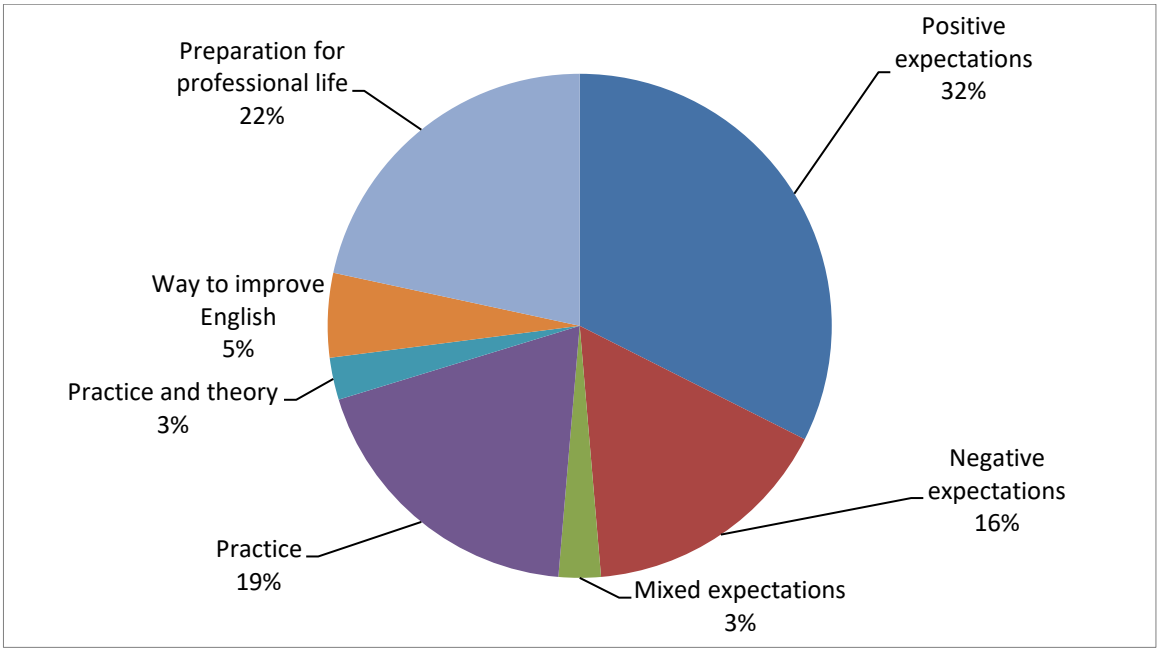


Figure 6.8: Non-KAU students: What were your expectations about translation modules at the beginning of the course?

Responses from non-KAU students (see Figure 6.8) for Themes A, B, and C suggested their feelings towards translation were somewhat less positive (32%, *n*=12) and more negative (16%, *n*=6) than the feelings of their KAU counterparts. Words used to describe expectations about translation in emotional terms were less varied: for Theme A, 'easy' and 'interesting', and for Theme B, only 'difficult'. Under Theme C, just one student expressed mixed expectations, judging that translation would be "not that easy but interesting" (AIU9S).

As with the KAU student responses, for Themes D and E, considerable variety emerged regarding expectations about what translation would consist of. A much larger group of students expected the emphasis to be wholly on the practical aspects of translation (19%, *n*=7) rather than on combining practice with theoretical underpinnings (3%, *n*=1). Responses for Theme D are illustrated by comments such as "I didn't expect to go deeply in translation. I expected we would have practical training" (KSU6S) and "To be more practical than theoretical […] I believe translation needs more practice than theory" (JU1S).

With regard to expectations about outcomes, in Theme F, 5% of non-KAU students (*n*=2) linked studying translation directly with improving their linguistic skills in English. KAR5S expected translation to "help me improve my language [presumably L2]" while QU2S thought it would be "just about learning a foreign language [i.e. English]".

One important difference between the responses of the KAU students and the responses from students of other Saudi universities could be seen in Theme G. Namely, more non-KAU students than KAU students expected that translation would be about preparation for professional life, with 22% (*n*=8) of responses related to the perceived vocational utility of translation. The adjective 'useful' featured five times in responses and the phrase 'job market' twice. Four other responses mentioned an expectation of exposure to a wide range of translation types as good preparation for the specialisation required in the professional world.

These responses illustrate the importance of understanding students' expectations. When students perceive a mismatch between what/how they think will be taught and what occurs in reality, frustration and confusion are likely to arise. The examples above suggest that this mismatch can be the result of a range of factors including inaccurate assessment of their own abilities or a basic lack of information about the aims/content of courses or modules.

A great deal of research has been conducted on the area of student expectations and the extent to which student expectations can influence personal levels of success in studying EFL (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). However, in the Saudi context, these studies have focused on students who are learning the language either at home or abroad because it is an obligatory prerequisite for entry into other university courses.

6.3.1 Expectations about translation modules

Students were next asked to think more specifically about their expectations in relation to the content of translation modules.

Q7. What did you expect to learn in the translation module(s)?

The response rate to this question was much lower among KAU students. Of the 85 respondents, nine individuals produced answers that were unclear, and 15 provided no response. The low response rate perhaps indicates that the respondents felt they had already shared anything relevant to this item in their answers to the previous item. Responses to Q7, as compared to responses to Q6, were wide-ranging and hence more difficult to categorise into broad themes. The largest group of responses related to expectations about the emphasis of the module content. Namely, most KAU students (see Figure 6.9) expected the emphasis to be on practice only (42%, *n*=26), with only 3% (*n*=2) expecting that theory would also play a role in the content. A similar number of responses indicated an expectation that the content of the translation module would prepare students for professional life.

26% of responses (*n*=16) referred to expectations about being exposed to a range of different text types including media texts (KAU8S, KAU17S, KAU83S) and literature (KAU45S, KAU2S). Several respondents also specifically noted expectations regarding whether the module would focus solely on Arabic to English translation (3%, *n*=2) or also include English to Arabic (8%, *n*=5). In the former case, this suggests that students presume translation will be used

predominantly as a method of testing grammatical knowledge of English. The similar idea that translation is primarily a means of developing language skills underpins the responses involving expectations about module content serving to improve vocabulary/dictionary skills (15%, *n*=9) in English.

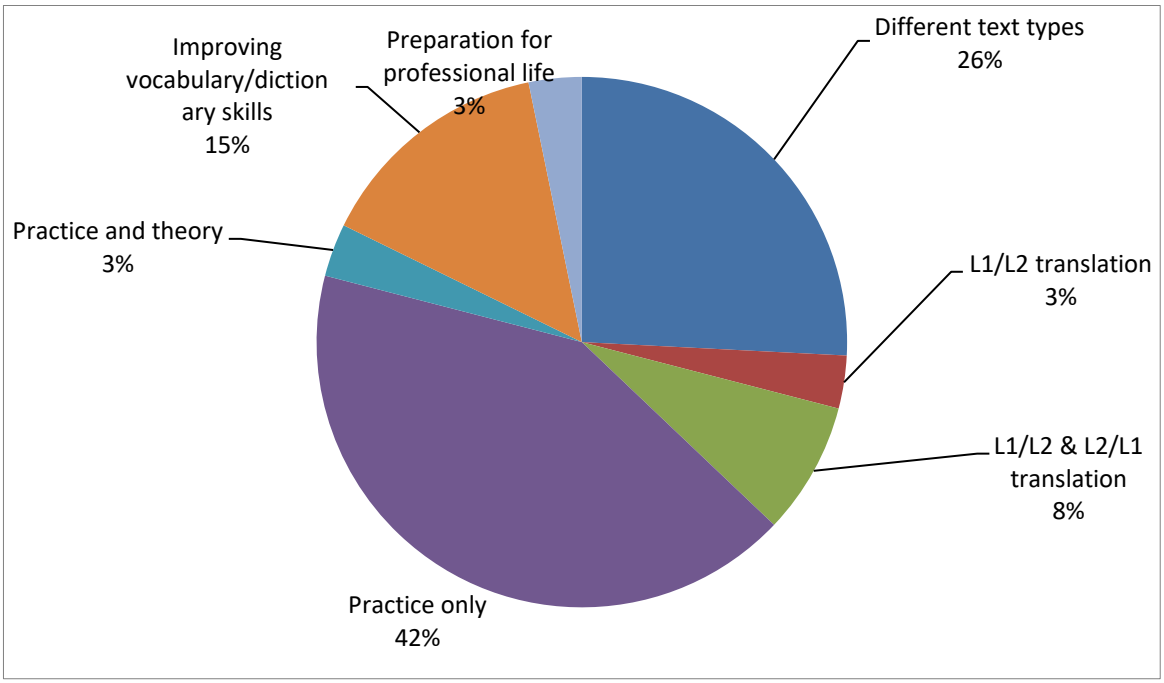


Figure 6.9: KAU students: What did you expect to learn in the translation modules?

In the case of the non-KAU students (see Figure 6.10) only three of the responses were excluded; all three were simply unclear. Categorising the answers provided by non-KAU students also proved easier. As with the KAU students, the largest group of responses related to expectations regarding the balance of practice and theory. 33% of respondents (*n*=9) expected that the module content would emphasise practice over theory (33%, *n*=9). 8% (*n*=2) considered that the emphasis in a translation module would be solely on theory.

8% of responses (*n*=2) also noted the expectation that the content of the translation module would prepare students for professional life.

A large group of students also referred to expectations about the inclusion in the module of a range of different text types (33%, *n*=9). These responses covered a broader selection than named by the KAU students, namely legal (UQU1S), medical (KAR2S, UQU1S), literary (UQU1s, KKU1S, KSU6S), academic articles (KSU6S), and films (KSU6S). This range suggests that students at other universities seem to have a broader understanding of translation, viewing translation as a professional skill and not simply in terms of a means to test language skills. This range may also indicate that the non-KAU respondents have already been exposed to different text types as part of their course and even subtitling. This finding in turn suggests a potential area of change for the KAU course, namely inclusion of more text types.

The KAU students closely linked translation with developing language skills primarily in English. Notably, however, 11% (*n*=3) of the sample of non-KAU students expected that module content would help to enhance their knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic. Indeed, if non-KAU students dealt with some of the text types mentioned above, they would be exposed to specialised discourse and genres that would expand both their L1 and L2 knowledge. Like their KAU counterparts, 8% (*n*=2) of non-KAU students expected that they would be translating both from and into Arabic.

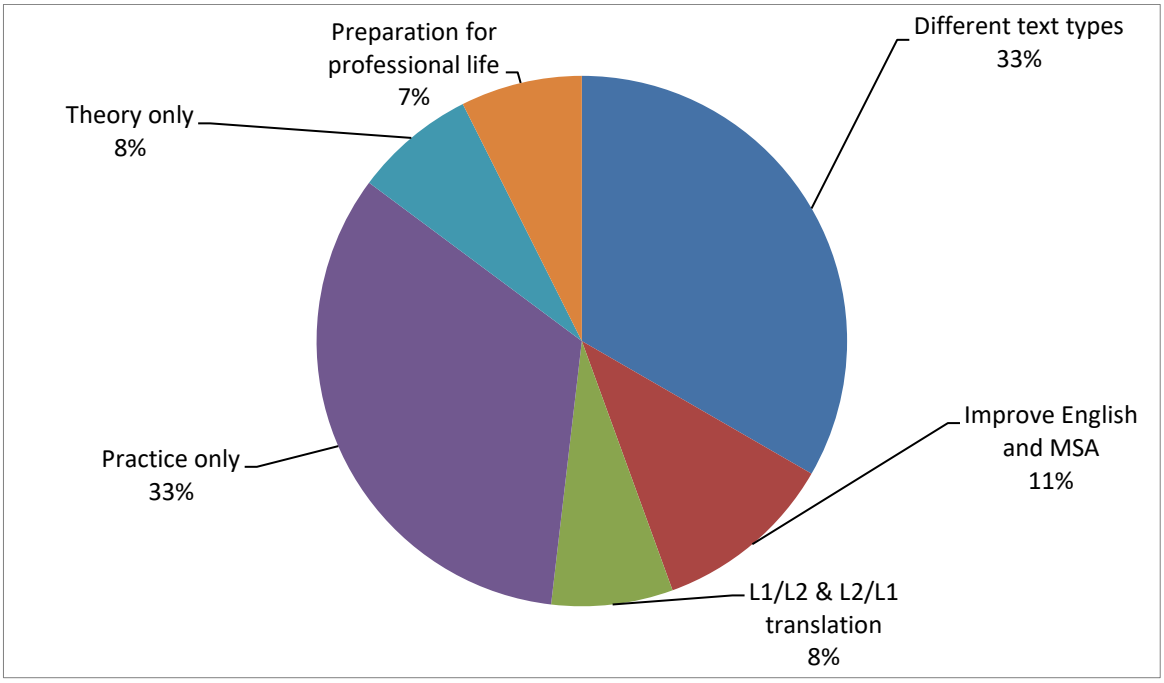


Figure 6.10: Non-KAU students: What did you expect to learn in the translation modules?

As with the responses to the previous questionnaire item, when students were asked to make their expectations explicit, it became apparent that in some instances the students were highly likely to feel frustrated and/or confused by what they would encounter in their studies. In short, the course content simply does not correspond to what many students think they will be learning and/or to how students think this content will be taught and assessed.

As Unruh and Obeidat (2015: 46) note, "The expectations for instruction, relationships with teachers, and habits of participation in class and study outside of class are formed in elementary, middle, and high school over a period of 12 to 13 years". In the Saudi school system, English courses with elements of 'translation' typically consists of carefully constructed sentences or texts intended to "ensnare them and lead them into error" (House, cited in Kiraly 1995: 7); the purpose of such exercises is only to test students' knowledge of grammar. This

approach often continues at university level, where the tutor "asks for alternative translation solutions, corrects the suggested version and finally presents the sentence in its final 'correct' form" (House, cited in Kiraly 1995: 7).

It is not feasible to demand that students suddenly shift from this teaching/learning paradigm to a perception of translation as an area of academic study or professional skill which has a value and purpose outside the classroom. Translation courses must ensure that students have a clear and accurate understanding of these different concepts of translation before students embark on any translation module, let alone on a translation course. Expectations in the form of learning outcomes also need to be made very clear within module descriptors and course programmes.

The process of articulating these intended learning outcomes will also require lecturers of English courses to reflect on the level of knowledge and skills expected from students and on the teaching processes and forms of assessment that are most appropriate for measuring whether the learning outcomes have been achieved (NCAAA, 2015: 29-30). This curriculum planning and review process will also serve the additional function of helping departments to identify areas in which staff expertise is lacking and to thereby improve the quality of the programme as a whole.

Many modules on degree courses are obligatory. Thus, the students themselves need to develop the capacity to reflect on the ways in which each module's learning aligns with their personal interests, skills, abilities, and career

aspirations. As Lucy Philip (2006: 37) notes, reflection is desirable because it accomplishes the following:

- Allows students to get the most from their education and other activities
- Sets the scene for and creates life-long learning
- Maximises personal and economic potential
- Enhances employability and enterprise skills.

The following questionnaire items were designed to allow students to identify which elements they felt were currently lacking from the translation aspect of their degree course.

6.4 Evaluation of Translation Modules

In the next series of questions, respondents were asked to evaluate specific aspects of the courses they were pursuing based on their personal experiences. Respondents were also asked to reflect on how any perceived shortcomings of these aspects of the course could be addressed.

It must be noted that whereas the 85 KAU students are all commenting on the same course and set of modules, this is not the case for the remaining students in the sample. The other 49 respondents were attending a broad range of universities which may teach quite diverse content in modules and on courses under the same heading of 'translation' (see Appendix 11 for course outlines for some universities AIU, JU, SEU, KAU, PNU and KSU). Disaggregating these non-

KAU students' responses into separate institutions would have produced groups consisting, in most cases, of non-representative samples of two or three students; therefore, the responses of the non-KAU students were not disaggregated. As a result, in the analysis of these responses, contradictory results did sometimes arise. Moreover, the responses have been interpreted in terms of general trends or underlying strengths and weaknesses in the provision in the Saudi context. Any instances where a difference seems to be institution-specific are commented on.

6.4.1 Clarity of objectives

The importance of ensuring that students have a clear and accurate understanding of the aims/content of courses or modules before embarking on study was noted in the literature review (Delisle, 1998). Accordingly, the first of the questions about evaluating translation modules focused on the clarity of module objectives (see Figure 6.11 and Figure 6.12).

> Q8. Were the objectives of the module(s) made clear at the beginning of the course?

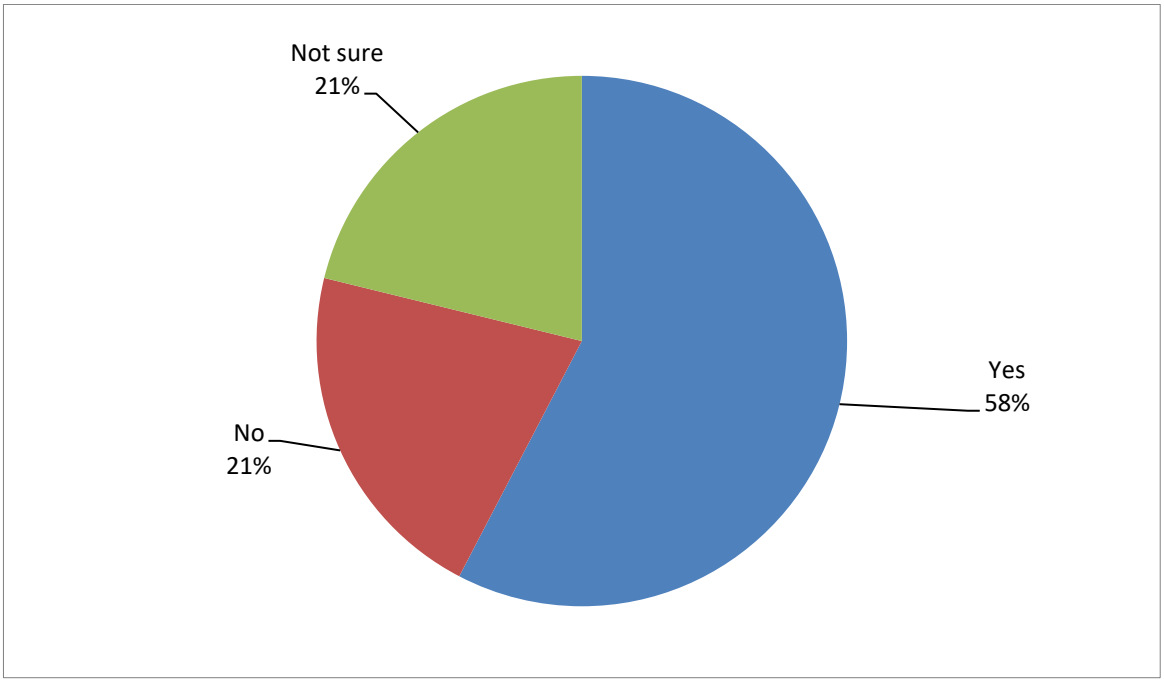


Figure 6.11: KAU students: Were the objectives of the module(s) made clear at the beginning of the course?

As Figure 6.11 shows, the majority of KAU students (58%, *n*=49) thought the objectives of the modules studied had been made clear at the beginning of the course. The remaining student responses were equally divided between those who answered 'No' and those who answered 'Not sure', comprising 21% (*n*=18) in each case.

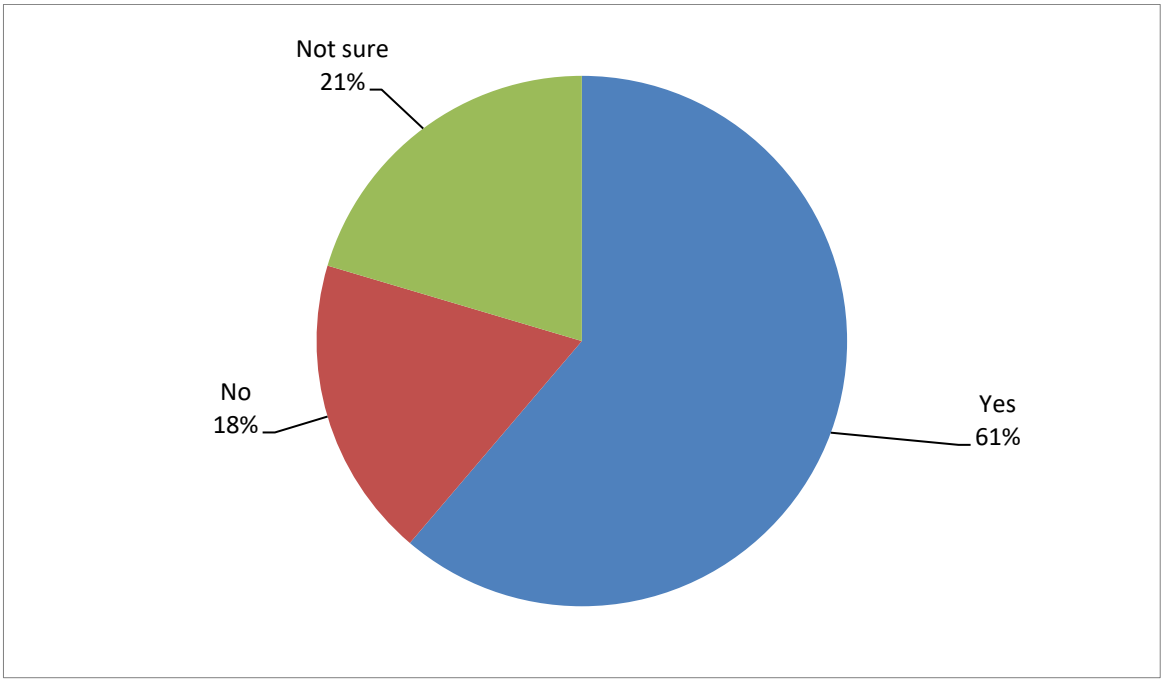


Figure 6.12: Non-KAU students: Were the objectives of the module(s) made clear at the beginning of the course?

A fairly similar pattern of responses was recorded from the non-KAU students for this questionnaire item (see Figure 6.12). Again, the majority of respondents from other universities (61%, *n*=31) thought that the objectives of the translation module(s) had been made clear. The remaining student responses recorded much lower percentages, with 18% (*n*=8) answering 'No' and 21% (*n*=11) choosing 'Not sure'.

It is unclear why approximately a fifth of both the KAU and non-KAU students chose 'Not sure' as a response to this simply phrased, closed-ended question. For a question of this type, one would expect students to have a definite opinion on whether the objectives were clear or not, and to select 'yes' or 'no' as appropriate. The response may mean that students thought the objectives were

not clear enough. If this is the case, then it could be argued that 42% (*n*=19) of KAU students and 39% (*n*=19) of students at other universities felt the objectives lacked clarity to a greater or lesser extent.

Another possible explanation is that these respondents were not sure about the meaning of the question itself, possibly because they were not familiar with the MSA words used to express 'clarity' or 'objectives', even though neither of these terms were deemed to be potentially confusing or ambiguous during the pilot study. This possibility raises the issue of the extent to which the responses to this question represent a valid reflection of student opinion on this topic.

However, previous responses from students concerning expectations about course/module content implied that a number of students had been surprised by what the course/modules involved. Their surprise may suggest several additional possibilities: (1) students are not provided with documentation concerning course/module objectives; (2) students are provided with documentation concerning course/module objectives, but the students fail to read or do not understand the documentation; or (3) what is actually taught on the module does not match what is meant to be taught on the module. All possibilities point to potential shortcomings that may impact on students' learning experience.

It is worth remembering that all KAU staff said that module objectives were made clear to their students, who received paper copies of the course documentation and could also access this content online. However, 14% of staff respondents from other universities thought objectives were not made clear to students, and 29% were unsure. Objectives in the teaching/learning and quality assurance process are of central importance (NCAAA, 2015); as such, these results highlight the need for ensuring that both students and staff are aware of objectives and of how objectives link to learning outcomes at both the module and course level (see Chapter 8).

6.5 Students' Suggested Changes to Current Provision

This item addresses perceived shortcomings in the current provision in relation to students' needs and the Saudi job market. The results for KAU participants are presented in Figure 6.13, and the results for non-KAU respondents appear in Figure 6.14. In the item that followed this one, students were given the opportunity to explain the thinking behind their answer.

> Q9. In your opinion, should further translation elements be added to the current course?

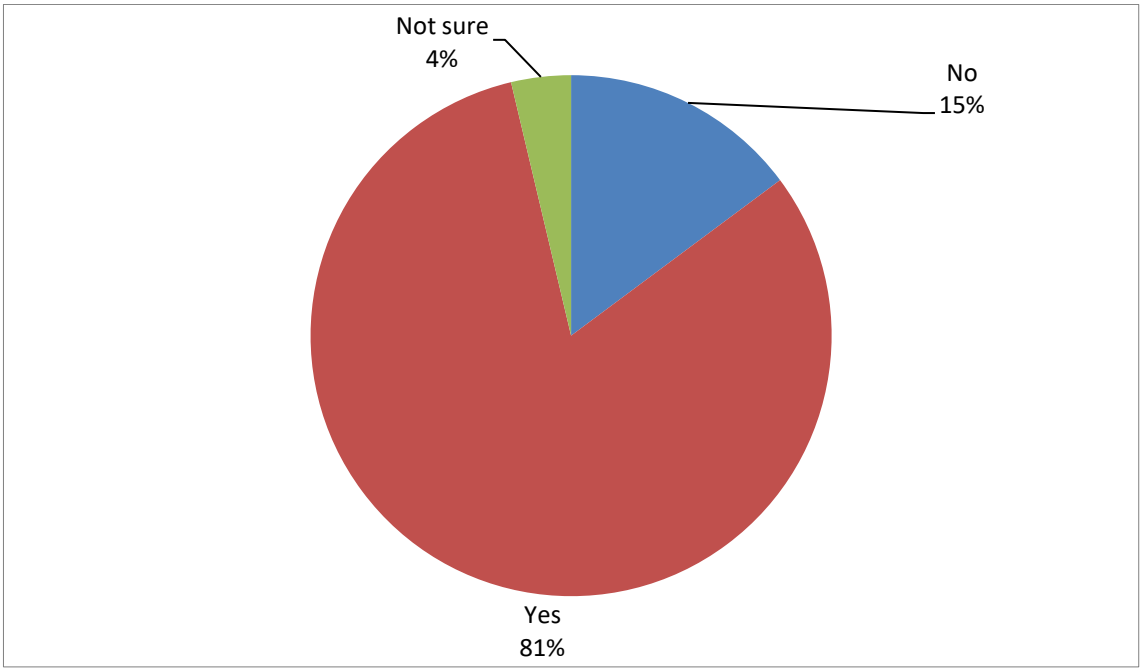


Figure 6.13: KAU students: In your opinion, should further translation elements be added to the current course?

The overwhelming majority of KAU students (81%, *n*=68) felt that further translation elements needed to be added to the existing course. Just 15% (*n*=13) indicated that they were happy with the translation element of the course as it was. A further 4% (*n*=4) were undecided on the issue of the need for additions to be made to the translation component of the degree course at KAU.

Q9. In your opinion, should further translation elements be added to the current course?

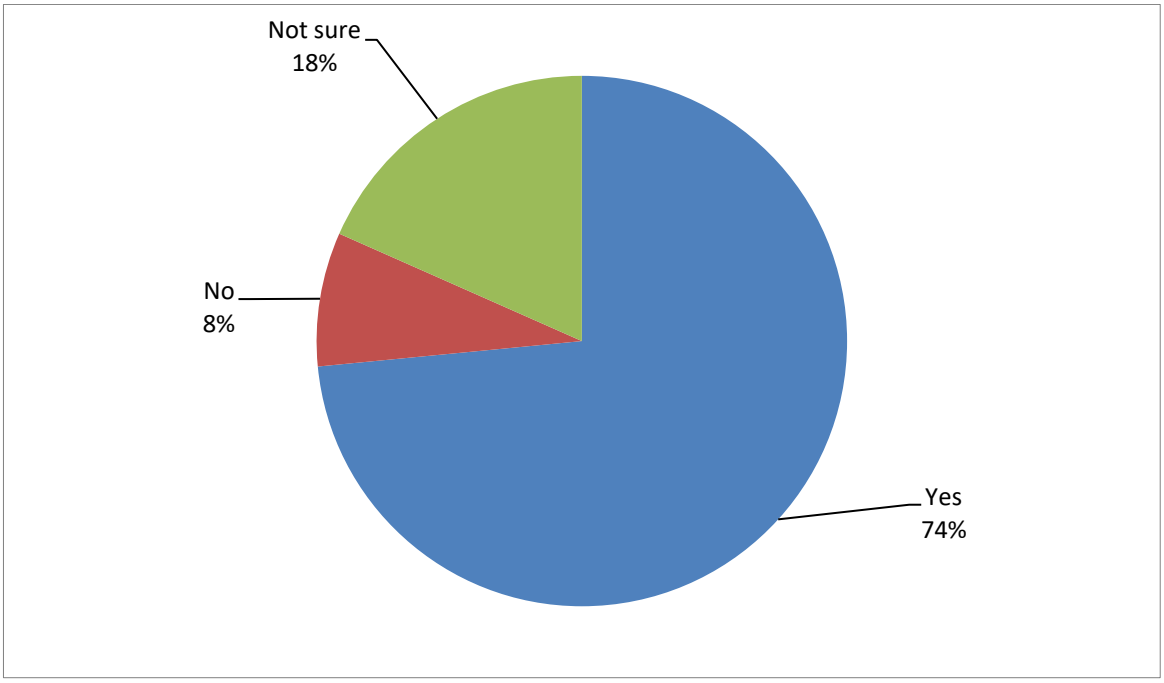


Figure 6.14: Non-KAU students: In your opinion, should further translation elements be added to the current course?

As shown in Figure 6.14, only 8% of the non-KAU students (*n*=4) expressed their satisfaction with the course as it currently was. A further 18% (*n*=9) were not sure whether additions to the course were necessary or not. However, these respondents were again very much in the minority. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (74%, *n*=36) from universities other than KAU thought that the courses they attended would benefit from the addition of other translation modules. While the overall balance of opinion was similar to the balance among the KAU students, with most students in favour of adding more translation elements to existing provision, the proportion of non-KAU students who were uncertain about this issue was greater.

In one sense, it could be argued that when asked a question of this kind respondents will tend towards answering 'yes' since most students can think of something that they believe is missing from current provision. Often what students feel is missing may relate to a particular personal interest that they believe is not catered to currently. However, as the final section of this questionnaire analysis shows (see Section 6.9, which examines cross-institutional themes), the comments that students made elsewhere in answers to other questionnaire items raised some interesting issues and highlighted some potential gaps in provision that would merit serious consideration. These answers also offered valuable insights into students' understanding of the nature of translation and how this understanding is framed within the course as a whole.

6.6 Translation modules and the job market

Q10. In your opinion, which elements should the course include in order to fulfil the needs of the current job market and of students?

In the next open-ended questionnaire item, students were asked to reflect on the extent to which the current provision at the institution which they attend matches what they perceive to be the needs of today's job market. Students may change their mind after graduation (see Chapter 7), but responses to the item about career aspirations suggested that many of them are already thinking seriously about working as translators after completing their studies. It is also likely that most of them are intending to seek employment within Saudi Arabia,

since the Kingdom has no significant tradition of its citizens seeking work outside the country, unlike its neighbouring Arab states of Jordan and Egypt.[33] Given the possibilities afforded by technology, it is possible that graduates may seek to enter the broader job market within the Gulf States as freelancers or to work for a transnational organisation or a multinational translation company (Fatani, 2009).

However, most Saudi universities still do not currently record any information about leavers formally. It is thus impossible to learn about graduate destinations and employability rates from these institutions. In addition, Abu-Ghararah (2017: 111) notes the continuing dearth of research about the translation industry and translation production, explaining why it is difficult to collate data from this area:

> the actual number of translators and interpreters in Saudi Arabia cannot be determined due to the absence of an official commercial register documenting the field and also due to the lack of a single central register of approved professional translators or to the lack of any regulation of translation activity.

[33] In 2015, a total of 978,877 Jordanians from the population of 9,531,712 were working abroad, some 778,247 of these in the Gulf States (Momani, 2015) https://www.oecd.org/migration/forum-migration-statistics /2.B-3-Ahmed-A-Momani.pdf). According to the Egyptian Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, in 2017, Saudi Arabia hosted 2.9 million of the 9.5 million Egyptians working outside their homeland (cited in *Egypt Independent* https://www.egyptindependent.com/9-5-million-egyptians-live-abroad-mostly-saudi-arabia-jordan/ 1/10/2017). In the first quarter of 2018, 10,183,104 non-Saudis were officially employed in Saudi Arabia. The only significant group of Saudis living abroad in 2016–2017 was students, with 139,914 enrolled in foreign educational institutions, according to the Saudi Ministry of Education. F. de Bel-Air (2018) *Gulf Labour Markets, Migration and Population*, http://gulfmigration.org/media/pubs/exno/GLMN_EN_2018_05.pdf).

For all these reasons, it is difficult to know to what extent students' responses to this questionnaire item actually match current market requirements. Nonetheless, students' responses do provide useful insights into students' perceptions about the nature of the profession of translator and the current needs within the translation market in Saudi Arabia and beyond. Students identified a number of ways in which they thought their current course could be altered to better equip them to enter the job market as professional translators and to enhance their employability as graduate linguists. Some of these insights may have come from family, friends, and acquaintances who work in this field or from university staff.

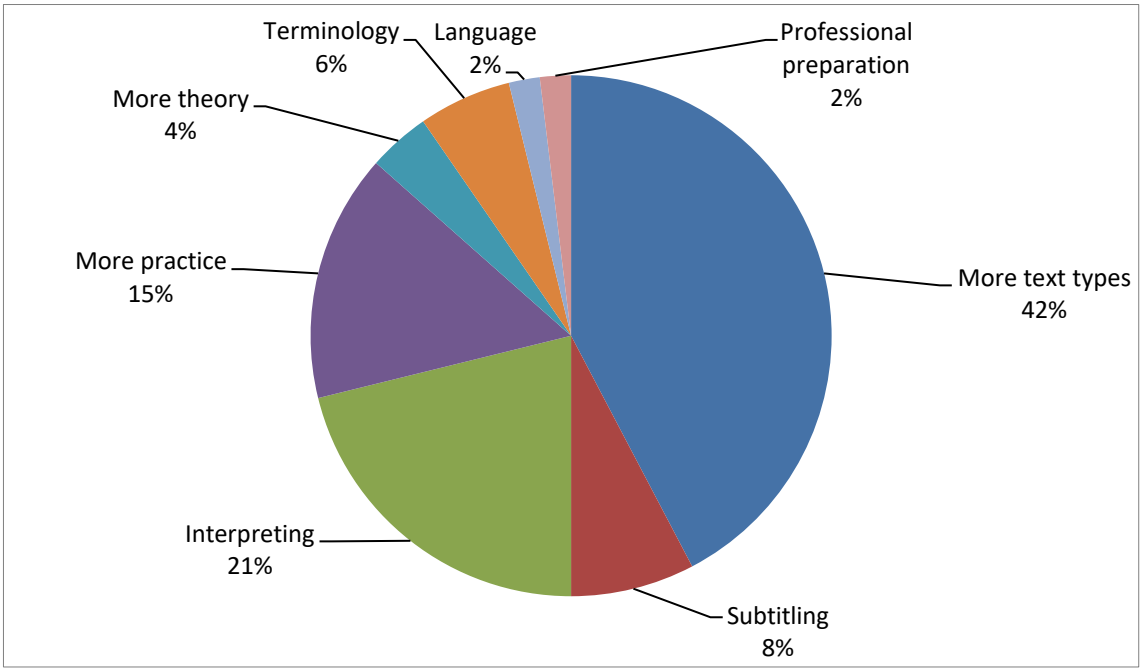


Figure 6.15: KAU students: In your opinion, which elements should the course include in order to fulfil the needs of the current job market and of students?

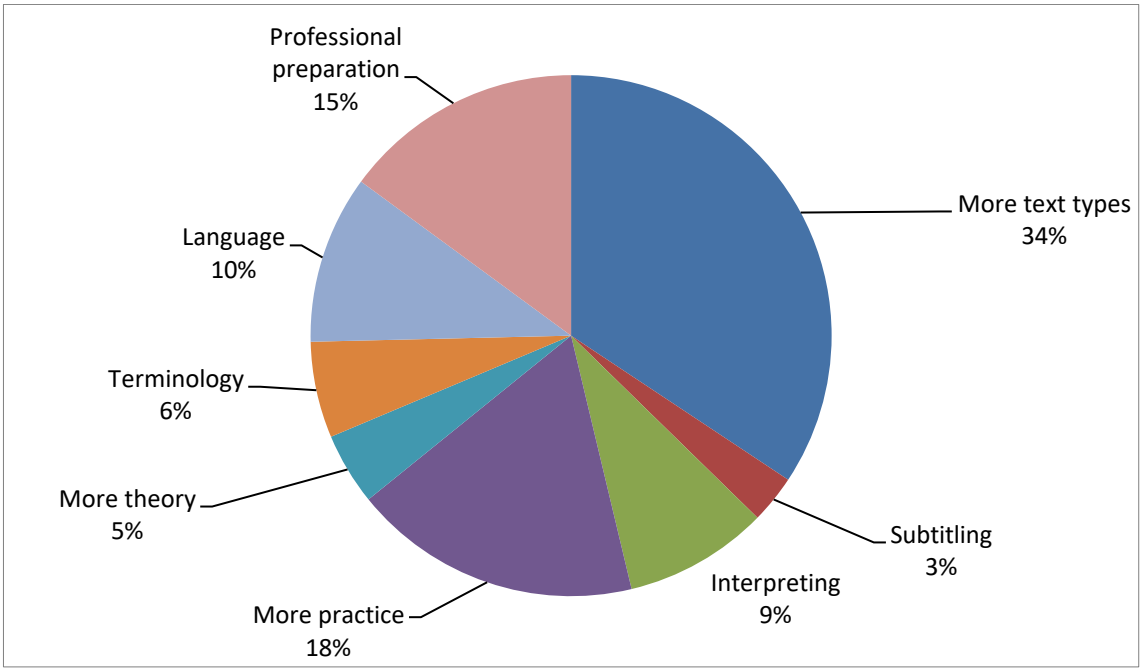


Figure 6.16: Non-KAU students: In your opinion, which elements should the course include in order to fulfil the needs of the current job market and of students?

With regard to both the KAU student responses (see Figure 6.15) and non- KAU student responses (see figure 6.16), the most popular suggestion related to more text types (42%, *n*=22) and (34%, n= 23). Students indicated a need to broaden the range of text types (KAU4S, KAU5S, KAU6S, KAU16S, KAU43S, KAU44S, KAU45S, KAU48S, KAU56S, KAU59S, KAU60 etc.) (QU1S, OTH1S, PNU6S, AIU6S, KSU4S) and increase exposure to texts from different domains. The domains included law (KAU5S (KSU2S, AIU7S), politics (KSU2S, AIU6S, KAR1S), finance/economics/business (KAU16S (KSU2S, AIU7S, KAR1S, QU1S), religion (KAU46S (PNU2S), and medicine (KAU40S, KAU46S, KAU56S, KAU59S) (AIU6S, AIU7S, QU1S, KAR1S). One student acknowledged that in reality translating legal texts without a legal background in both Arabic and English would be difficult (KSU2S). Some student mentioned literary translation (KAU6S, KAU12S) (KKU1S). Another student (KSU1S) recommended that "Texts should

be like those found in real life", though this student did not actually make the more obvious suggestion that students might actually be taught using "real-life" texts.

These responses suggest a lack of variety in the translation material currently being used with language students in Saudi universities. The responses also indicate the difficulties of designing a curriculum for translation in terms of making decisions about the text types that students should be exposed to: too many different types or genres can prove overwhelming and counterproductive; too few can leave students feeling underprepared for entering the world of work.

The literature is not prescriptive about the sources of the material that should be used in translation classes or the text types that should be included. However, it does outline some principles that can be applied.

- Courses need to pay close attention to local conditions and specificities (Ulrych, 2005).
- Courses need to be responsive to new technological developments as these emerge (Asensio, 2001).
- Courses need to be aware of the changing market for professional translation services (Asensio, 2001).
- Courses must remember that students are not "always and everywhere the same" (Cronin, 2005: 259).

A good example of incorporating the implications of these criteria in the Saudi context would be the inclusion of Arabisation (Al-Juboory, 2010) in the curriculum, particularly in relation to media products. The localisation of Western source texts, particularly television shows, for an Arabic-speaking Muslim target audience is a growing phenomenon (Haschke, 2012), and a process of translation which requires a wide range of skills. This form of translation would also provide good case study material for students in reflecting on theories of cross-cultural adaptation.

In the balance between practice and theory, respondents were clearly in favour of increasing the former (18%, *n*=12) rather than the latter (5%, *n*=3), following the pattern for their KAU counterparts. One student even stipulated that "Theory should not exceed 30% of the module content" (KKU1S).

Tennent (2005: xxii) argues that theory needs to be included in translation training courses because it encourages students to understand that "translation is a linguistic, social and cultural practice that takes place in a particular moment in history". Thus, Tennent asserts, theory helps students to be more self-reflective and responsible practitioners. Pym (2005: 3) is less convinced by the role of theory, arguing that theory is "abstruse and useless: only professionals know the realities of translation; trainees thus need the professional skills, not the academic theories". However, Pym acknowledges that theory is important in terms of securing institutional power for translation studies as an academic discipline.

On the other hand, non-KAU students placed considerably more emphasis on the need for enhancing their employability skills as graduate linguists. 15% of the respondents (*n*=10) highlighted the need for professional preparation. Some suggestions focused on generic skills such as time management (KSU3S) while others focused on more translation-specific skills such as editing and revising translated texts (KSU10S), both of which are frequently undertaken by translators working with machine translation or in multinational teams. Just two of these students mentioned working with translation technology (KSU10S) and translation software (AIU3S). This lack of mention of translation technology may indicate that this area is not one that most students are aware of. Such a lack of awareness would be problematic given the growing importance in the commercial context of machine translation, which is also increasingly used by large transnational bodies such the European Commission and the World Bank (Sakhr Software, 2018: online). The topic of IT skills is discussed in more detail in Section 6.7.9.

Perhaps surprisingly, with regard to professional preparation, only two students specifically mentioned that a period of practical training should be included in the course as means of addressing the current needs of the job market, and companies or government ministries were identified as suitable locations for this to take place (AIU9S, TAU2S). One of these respondents (TAU2S) thought such practical training would be best placed at the beginning of the course; the respondent did not provide any reasons for why the start of the course would be an appropriate stage for this work-based experience. However, perhaps a brief

work-shadowing experience during the first year of the course could indeed serve as a means of introducing students to translation work as a career. In her article about employability and postgraduate linguists, Torres-Hostench (2012) concluded that students needed not only the right knowledge to succeed in finding employment as translators but also the right skills and attitudes; a work-shadowing experience, she argued, might give students useful insights into the latter.

It is striking that in response to this questionnaire item, more non-KAU students 10% (*n*=7) than KAU respondents emphasised the importance of improving language skills. Non-KAU students were also specific about the need to enhance their knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic, mentioning Arabic grammar, vocabulary, and morphology as areas where they thought the current provision was lacking. These responses may seem somewhat odd in the context of a question relating to the needs of the job market. However, Arabic translators do face real difficulties due to the diglossic nature of the language. Namely, Arabic has distinct forms: a spoken variant, a formal written type (Modern Standard Arabic), and the Classical Arabic used in the Quran and in liturgical and legal texts.[34]

A further complication merits consideration here. In many Western societies, professional translators would rarely be expected to work into a language which

[34] See Ferguson (1959) Diglossia, *Word*, **15**(2), pp.325-340.

was not their mother tongue;[35] translators are in fact actively discouraged from doing so by some professional organisations. In the Arab world, however, it is the norm. Arabic-speaking translators are expected to work both from and into English (Ayachia, 2018).

This reality may also help to explain why terminology in Arabic and English also merited specific mentions (6%, *n*=4) from both KAU and non-KAU students since translating specialist scientific and medical texts from English into Arabic poses particular challenges.

Other specialisms such as interpreting and subtitling were also mentioned by both groups of students, though interpreting featured much more prominently in the KAU responses (21%, *n*=21 versus 9%, *n*=6).

The responses to this questionnaire item suggest that the students in this sample have a reasonable grasp of the demands of the job market for professional translators in their own national context and in the wider Arab world. In particular, non-KAU students seem to have an even clearer understanding of the skills required and also of the various discourse domains, such as legal or medical texts. This awareness throughout the sample was

[35] This is not the case for interpreters who provide liaison interpreting, which involves working both into and out of one's own principal language. Within transnational organizations such as the European Parliament, for example, interpreters are increasingly expected to work into English regardless of whether English is their first language or not.

perhaps to be anticipated given that respondents were self-selecting and hence likely interested in translation as a possible career after graduation.

6.7 Student Evaluations of Elements of Current Course

This questionnaire item allowed students to provide their opinion on nine elements of their current course. In responding to each element, students used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'excellent' to 'very poor'. Given that students came from a diverse selection of institutions, a 'non-applicable' category was also available to address the possibility that courses might not contain all the elements to be evaluated, such as technological skills, for example.

However, throughout these responses, the 'Not applicable' category seemed to be overused, applied even where justifying its usage seems difficult. For example, in the item "How would you rate teaching methods?", it is unclear why students would think 'Not applicable' constituted a valid response unless they are enrolled in courses without any lecturers, which seems highly unlikely. As with other questionnaire items that produced unclear or invalid responses, this overuse of 'Not applicable' raises the issue of whether students failed to understand the question (even though none of these items led to difficulties when piloted) or possibly were displaying a phenomenon known as "respondent fatigue" (Lavrakas, 2008: 743). Respondent fatigue has been observed in questionnaire respondents when they become tired or bored, usually with the later sections of a questionnaire. As a result, respondents "often answer 'don't know', engage in straight-line responding (i.e. choosing answers down the same

column on a page), give more perfunctory answers, or give up answering the questionnaire altogether" (Lavrakas, 2008: 743).

Given this rather unusual pattern in responses, the responses' validity was checked. Validity is ensured below by comparing these responses, particularly the open-ended items, with responses elsewhere in the questionnaire. For the open-ended items, the students are clearly choosing to record issues that were of great importance to them.

Where relevant, the implications of specific responses are discussed individually. A more general discussion also follows at the end of this section.

6.7.1 Library resources (Q11a)

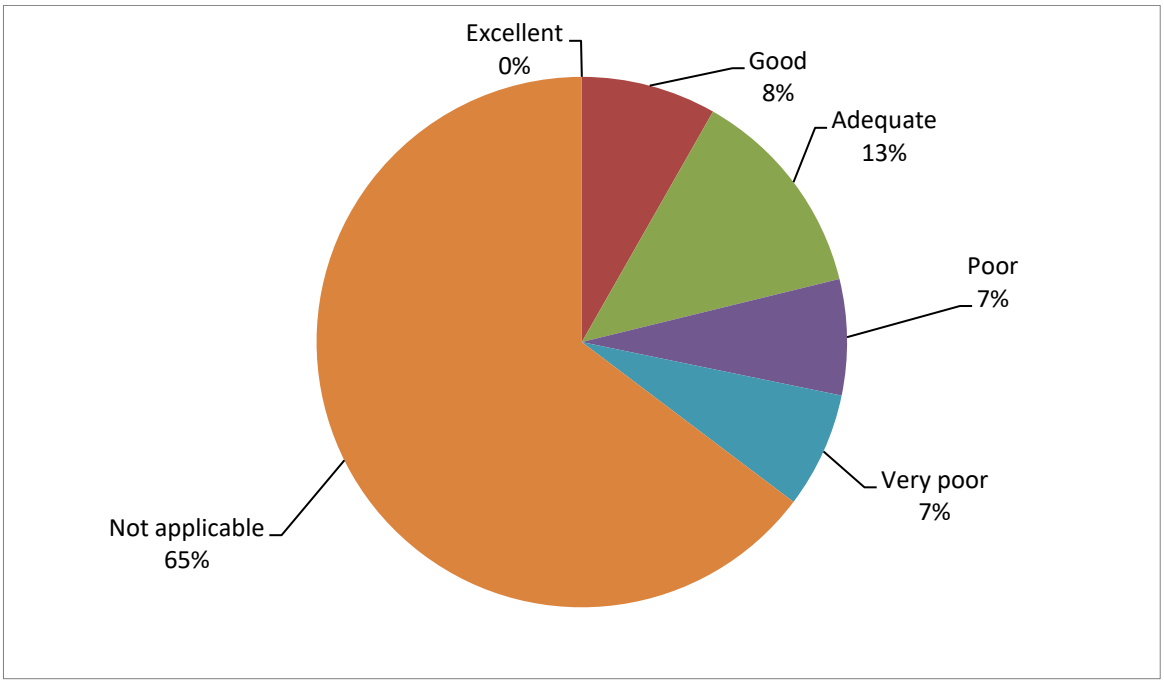


Figure 6.17: KAU students: How would you rate library resources?

The use of the 'Not applicable' category was particularly confusing in the case of Item 11a relating to library resources. As shown in Figure 6.17, 65% of KAU students (*n*=55) selected the 'Not applicable' category. However, since other students did choose to rate these resources, library resources clearly do exist. This item was also the only one where not a single respondent selected 'Excellent'. This result could, of course, be simply a reflection of students' poor opinion. But again, these responses do not match the spread seen elsewhere in the KAU student responses. This inconsistency makes it difficult to interpret these results in any meaningful way other than to say negative opinions of the library resources (Poor 7%, *n*=6 and Very Poor 7%, *n*=6) outweighed positive opinions (Good 8%, *n*=7).

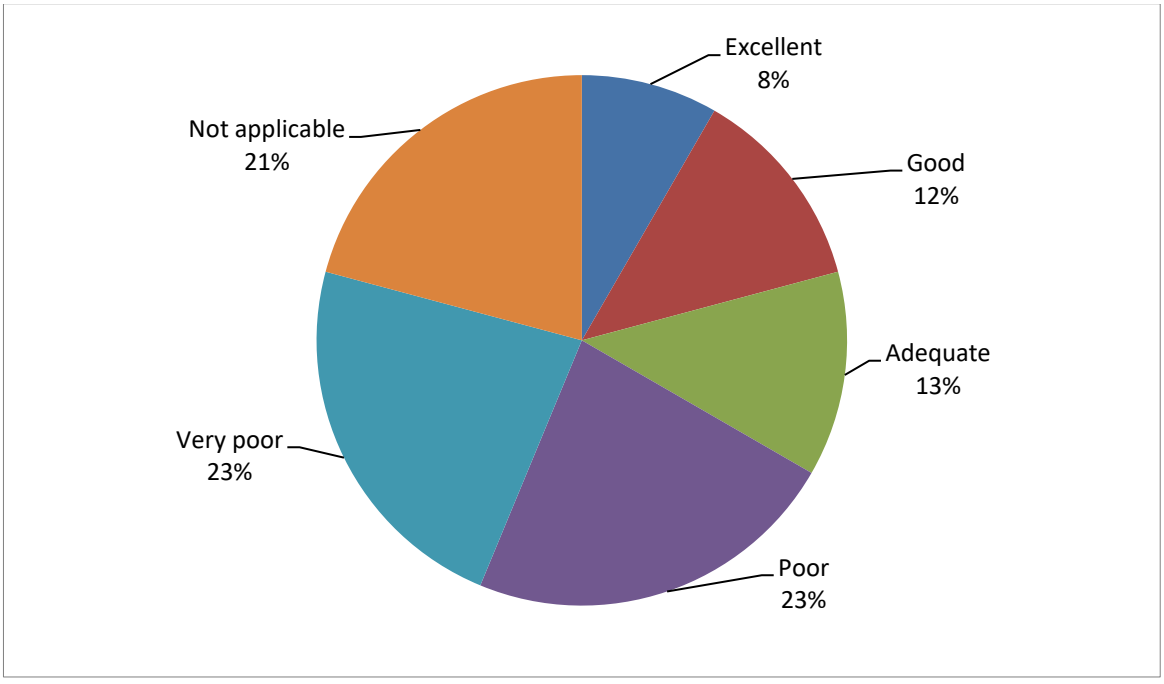


Figure 6.18: Non-KAU students: How would you rate library resources?

In the case of non-KAU students, as might be expected given that students are commenting on a range of Saudi universities, opinions diverged. Once again, though, the 'Not applicable' category response was higher than for any of the other items. This inconsistency perhaps points to students failing to understand something about the wording of this question. In this case, students were overwhelmingly negative in their opinions of this aspect of the course. Nearly half rated library resources Poor (23%, *n*=11) or Very Poor (23%, *n*=11) as opposed to positive ratings of Excellent (8%, *n*=4) and Good (12%, *n*=6). Looking at the breakdown by university, negative student responses are spread across the Likert scale except for those from AIU and KAR. Among these two universities, the highest rating selected was 'Adequate'. Guidance on library resources is not provided at KAU. It has not been possible to verify whether lack of such guidance is also the case in the other universities.

6.7.2 Teaching methods (Q11b)

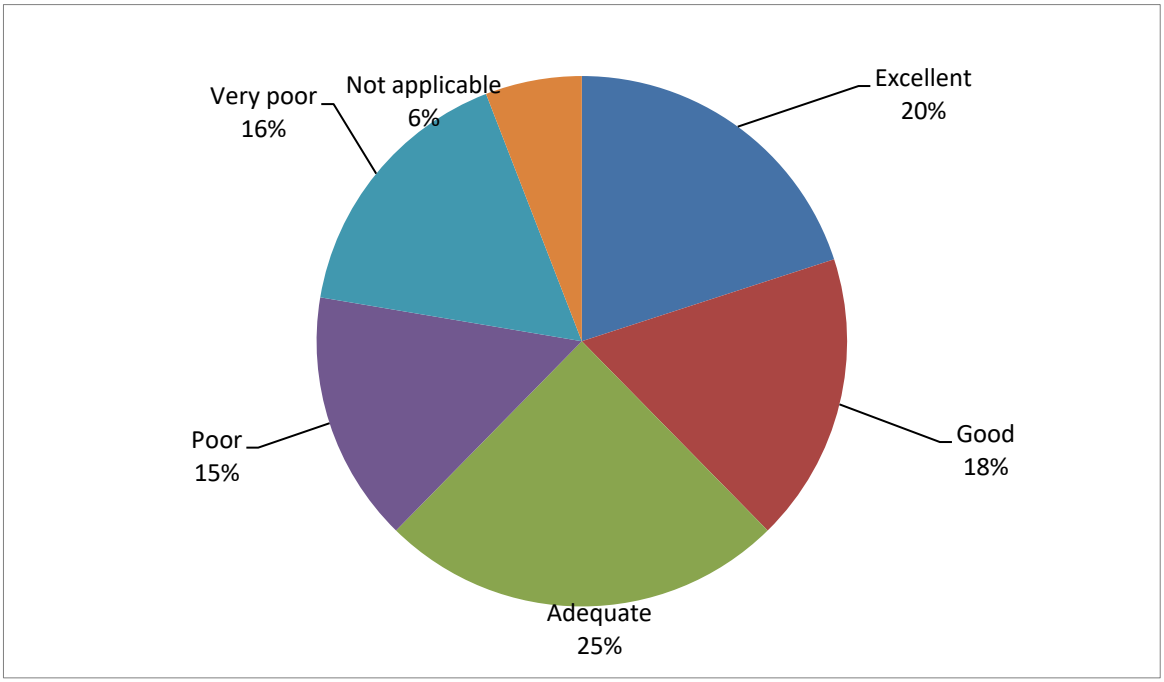


Figure 6.19: KAU students: How would you rate teaching methods?

As Figure 6.19 shows, 63% of students rated the teaching methods used at KAU as Adequate (25%, *n*=21) or, more positively, as Good (18%, *n*=15) or Excellent (20%, *n*=17). However, those expressing negative opinions still made up 31% of the sample, with Poor accounting for 15% (*n*=13) and Very Poor 16% (*n*=14).

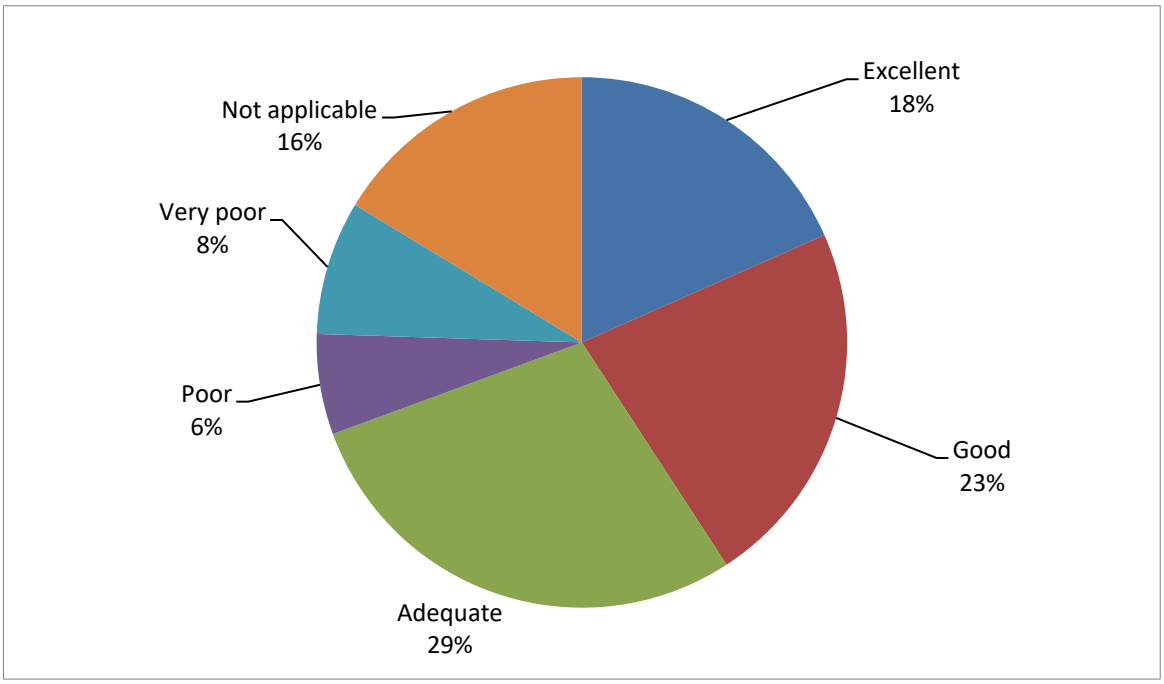


Figure 6.20: Non-KAU students: How would you rate teaching methods?

In the case of non-KAU students, although the 'Not applicable' category was relatively high, generally these students indicated a more favourable attitude towards the teaching methods to which they were exposed at the various universities they attended (see Figure 6.20). Responses for specific institutions did not cluster in any of the categories. 29% of respondents (*n*=14) ranked the teaching methods as Adequate, and a further 41% in total rated them positively as either Excellent (18%, *n*=9) or Good (23%, *n*=11). Negative opinions were

much lower than those for KAU, with Poor at 6% (*n*=3) and Very Poor at 8% (*n*=4).

A detailed consideration of these results follows at the end of this section.

6.7.3 Assignments given (Q11c)

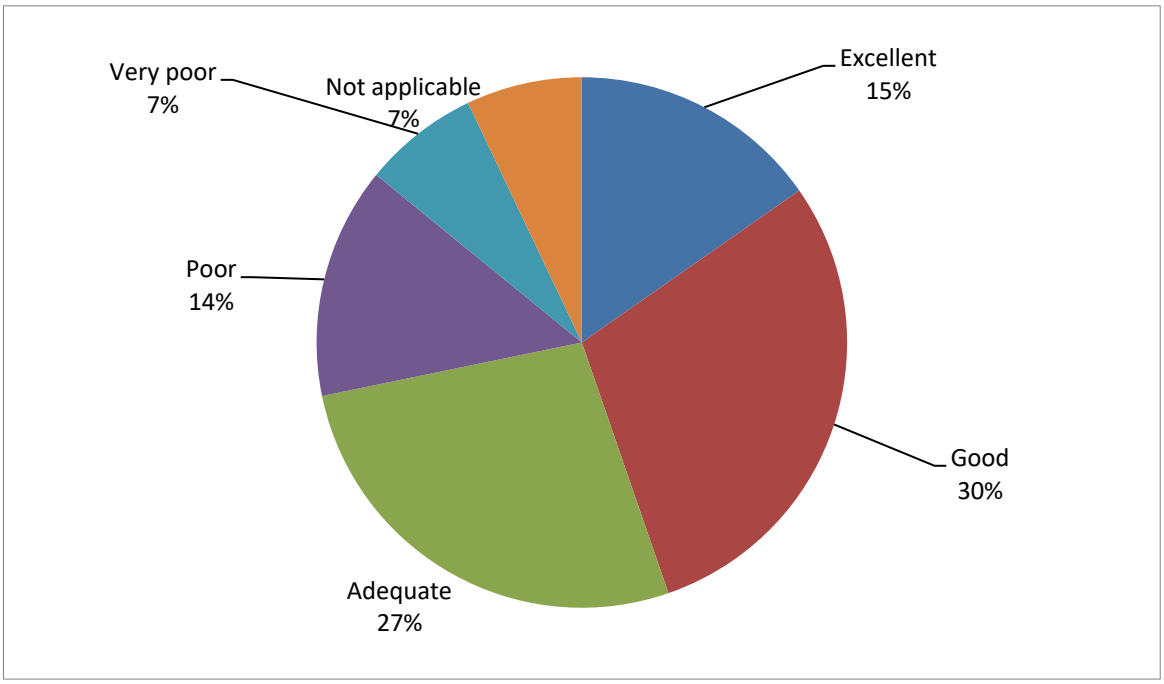


Figure 6.21: KAU students: How would you rate assignments given?

The spread of opinions regarding the assignments given among KAU students was considerably more positive than negative. 45% of respondents ranked this element as either Good (30%, *n*=25) or Excellent (15%, *n*=13), and only 21% categorised it as Poor (14%, *n*=12) or Very Poor (7%, *n*=6). A further 27% (*n*=23) indicated their satisfaction with this element of the course as Adequate.

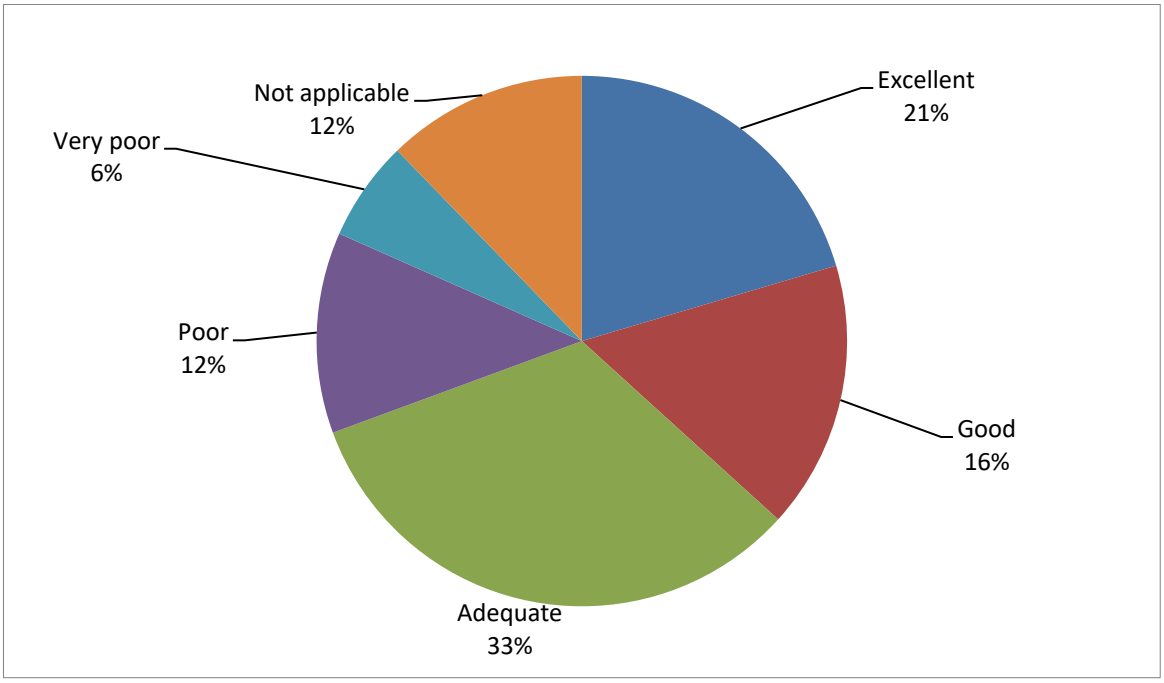


Figure 6.22: Non-KAU students: How would you rate assignments given?

As for non-KAU respondents, opinions on this aspect of the course were again considerably more positive than negative, as illustrated in Figure 6.. A higher percentage of non-KAU students ranked it as Excellent 21% (*n*=10). Only 18% in total indicated that the assignments given were either Poor (12%, *n*=6) or Very Poor (6%, *n*=3). As with non-KAU responses on previous elements, responses on assignments given demonstrated a spread of student opinion and no noticeable clustering of responses by institution in any of the ranking categories.

6.7.4 Relevance of module objectives to content (Q11d)

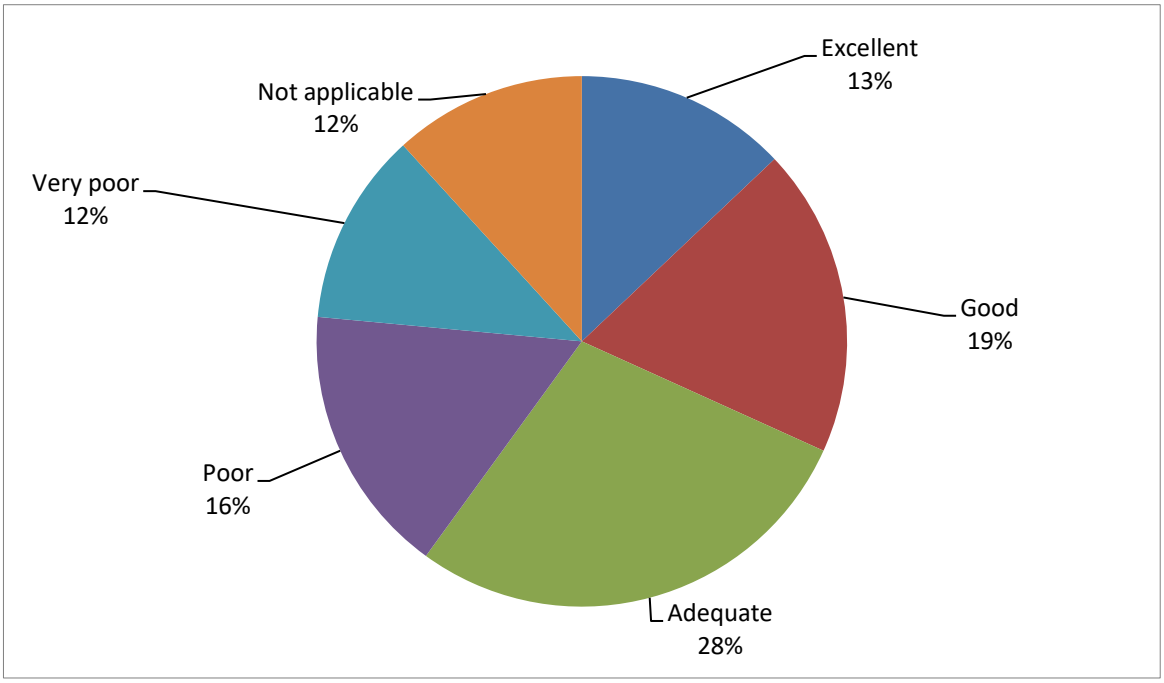


Figure 6.23: KAU students: How would you rate the relevance of module objectives to content?

In the next item, students were asked to rate the extent to which they thought the content of the modules they were studying matched the objectives for these modules. Opinions on this aspect of the provision were less obviously positively or negatively weighted. However, overall, only 28% (*n*=24) actually expressed dissatisfaction with the relationship between module objectives and content, with Poor at 16% (*n*=14) and Very Poor at 12% (*n*=10) as Figure 6. shows.

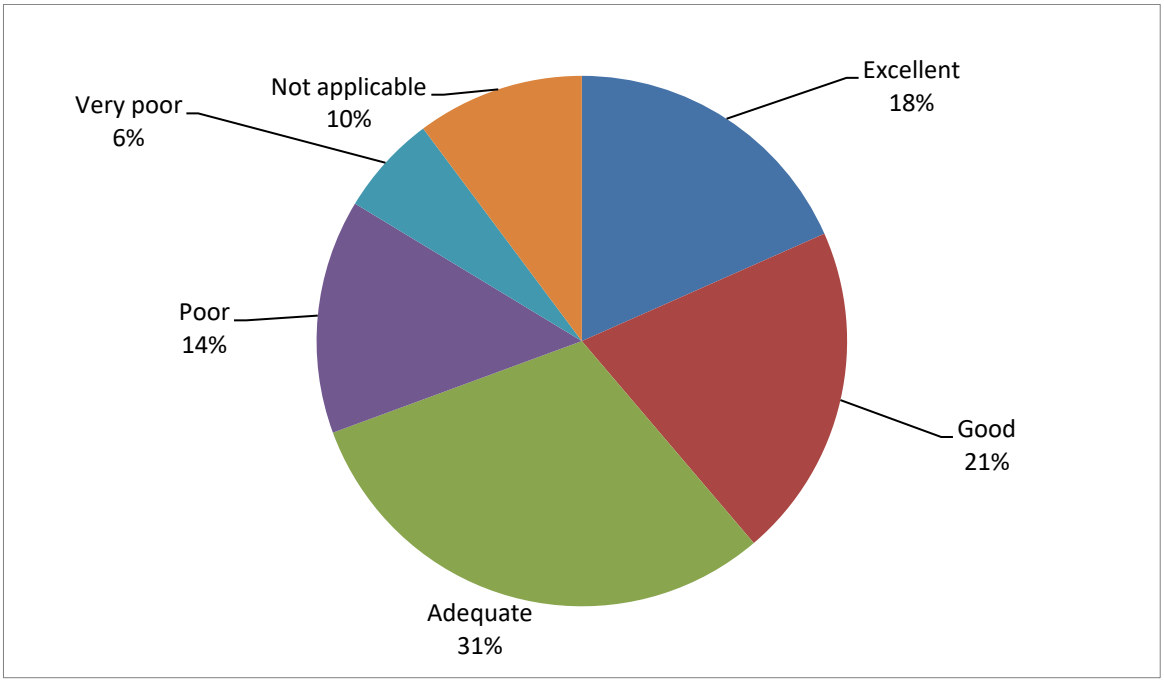


Figure 6.23: Non-KAU students: How would you rate the relevance of module objectives to content?

A similar emphasis towards student satisfaction was visible among non-KAU students for this item (see Figure 6.23), with 31% (*n*=15) categorising it as Adequate, 21% (*n*=10) as Good, and 18% (*n*=9) as Excellent. Only 20% in total (Poor 14%, *n*=7 and Very Poor 6%, *n*=3) indicated that they thought there was a mismatch to a greater or lesser extent between objectives and module content. Once again, there was a spread of institutions represented across the categories.

It is worth noting that the results for a previous item (see Section 6.7.4) suggested that course objectives are not always conveyed clearly, or even at all, to students. Namely, 21% of the students both from KAU and from the non-KAU sample were unsure about whether the objectives of the translation modules had

been made clear at the beginning of the course. This failure could be due to poor administration or communication issues. It could also point to more significant shortcomings within course curricula. Regardless, the results for this prior item lead one to wonder whether some of these students were able to make an informed judgment about this item.

6.7.5 Relevance of texts chosen for translation (Q11e)

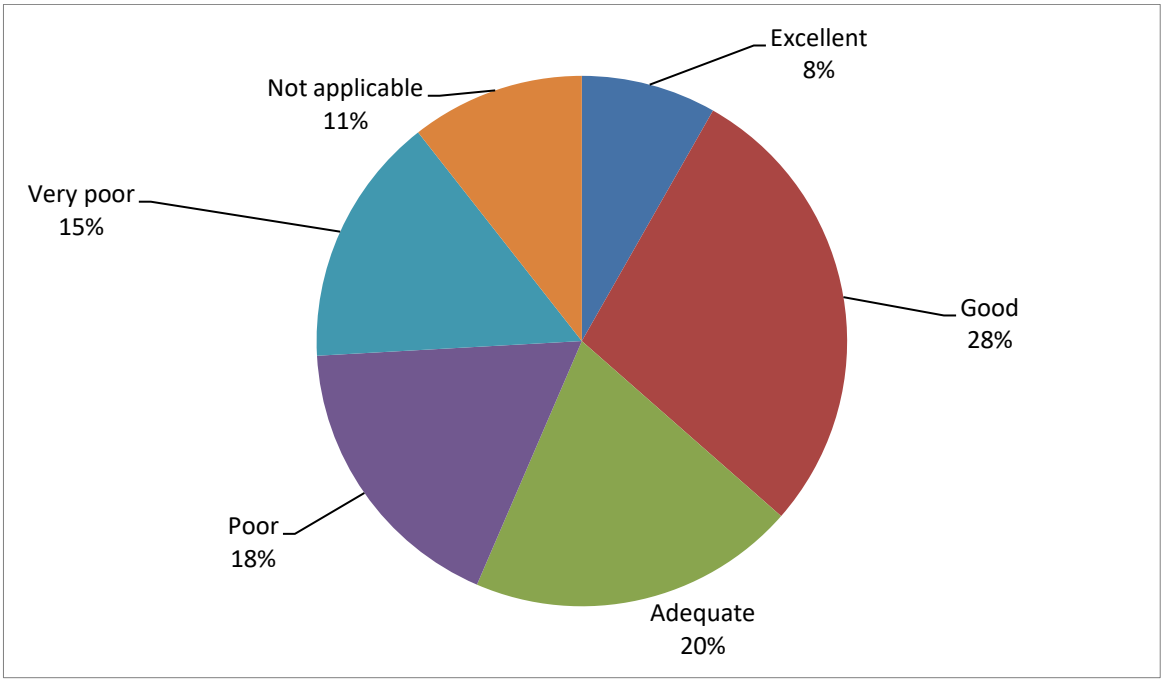


Figure 6.24: KAU students: How would you rate the relevance of texts chosen for translation?

When asked to rate the relevance of the texts that had been chosen for translation in the course, the percentages of KAU students expressing either positive or negative opinions were fairly balanced. The former total equalled 36% (Excellent 8%, *n*=7 and Good 28%, *n*=24), and the latter 33% (Poor 18%, *n*=15 and Very Poor 15%, *n*=13). However, given that 20% (*n*=17) responded Adequate, overall the students' level of satisfaction to a greater or lesser degree rose for this item to 56%.

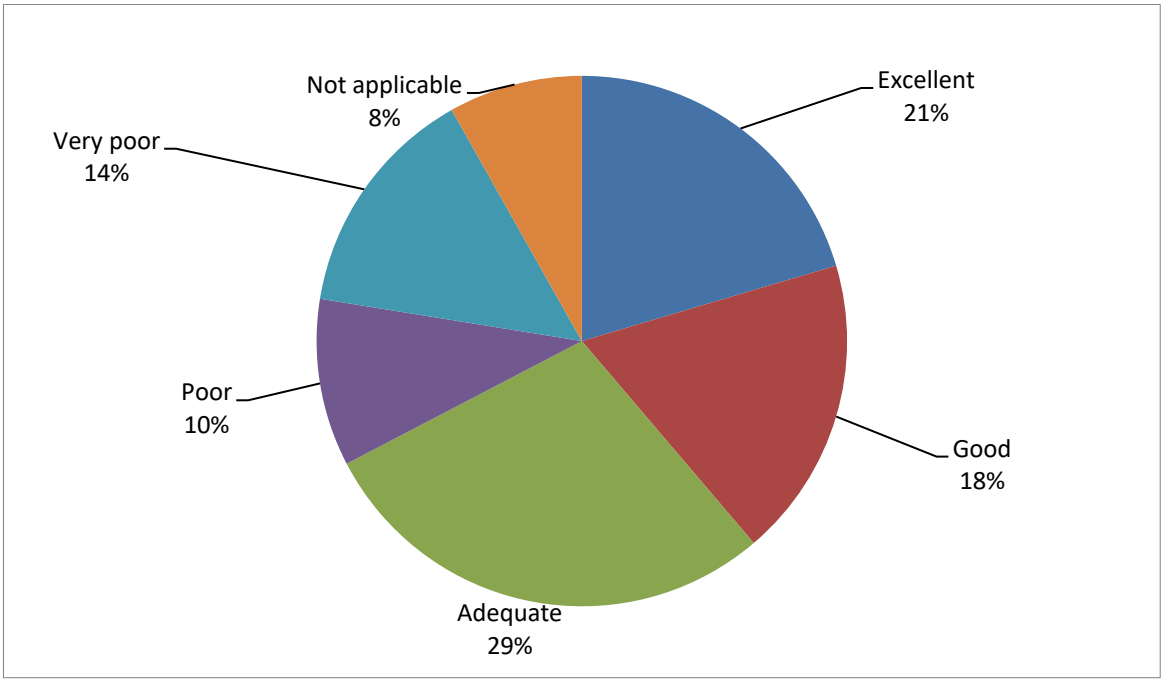


Figure 6.25: Non-KAU students: How would you rate the relevance of texts chosen for translation?

As shown in Figure 6.25, a clearer difference between positive and negative opinions could be seen in the case of the students from other universities. 39% indicated that they thought the texts used for translation had been well chosen (Excellent 21%, *n*=10 and Good 18%, *n*=9), compared to just 24% expressing dissatisfaction to a greater or lesser degree (Poor 10%, *n*=5 and Very Poor 14%, *n*=7). Analysis showed that, in terms of responses from the non-KAU student sample, none of the institutions could be singled out as particularly good or bad for this item. When the response for Adequate (29%, *n*=14) was also included for this item, the overall level of student satisfaction with the relevance of the texts rose to 68%, higher than that for the KAU course.

The key adjective here is the word 'relevance' since students will presumably judge relevance in relation to how they perceived the texts studied to be relevant to their own needs. Given that students have a broad range of expectations about translation (Figures 6.7- 6.10), different career aspirations (Figure 6.39 and Figure 6.40), and different levels of knowledge about the current translation market, the understanding of the notion of relevance may vary considerably from one individual to another. Drawing any firm conclusions from this item is therefore difficult. In addition, without information about the actual text types used in the translation components of these courses, it is also difficult to judge what students perceive. At the time of writing, no replies had been received from other universities to requests for information about the texts used for translation.

6.7.6 Final outcome (Q11f)

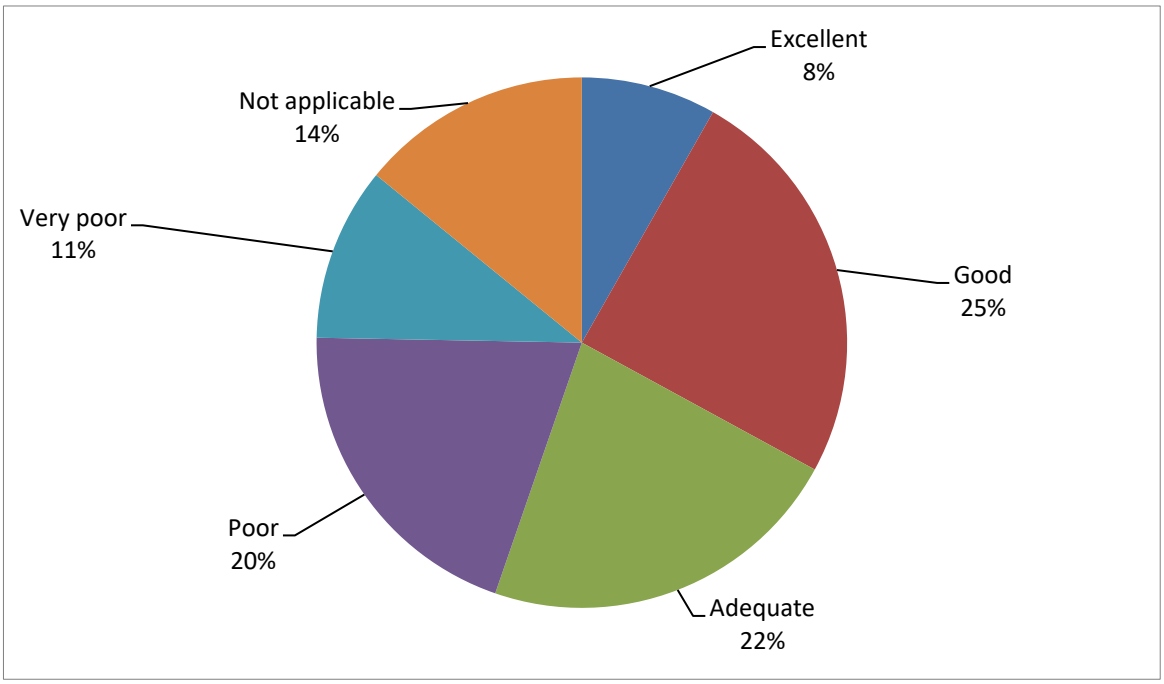


Figure 6.26: KAU students: How would you rate the final outcome?

This item was intended to measure students' satisfaction with the final output of the course, i.e. with the competitiveness of graduates that were produced after four years of study. As with the previous item, percentages of KAU students who chose to express specifically positive or negative opinions about this topic were fairly balanced (see Figure 6.26). 33% adopted a positive stance (Excellent 8%, *n*=7 and Good 25%, *n*=21), and 31% indicated dissatisfaction (Poor 20%, *n*=17 and Very Poor, 11%, *n*=9). Again, the percentage choosing to categorise the final output as Adequate (22%, *n*=19) produced an overall satisfaction rating of 55%.

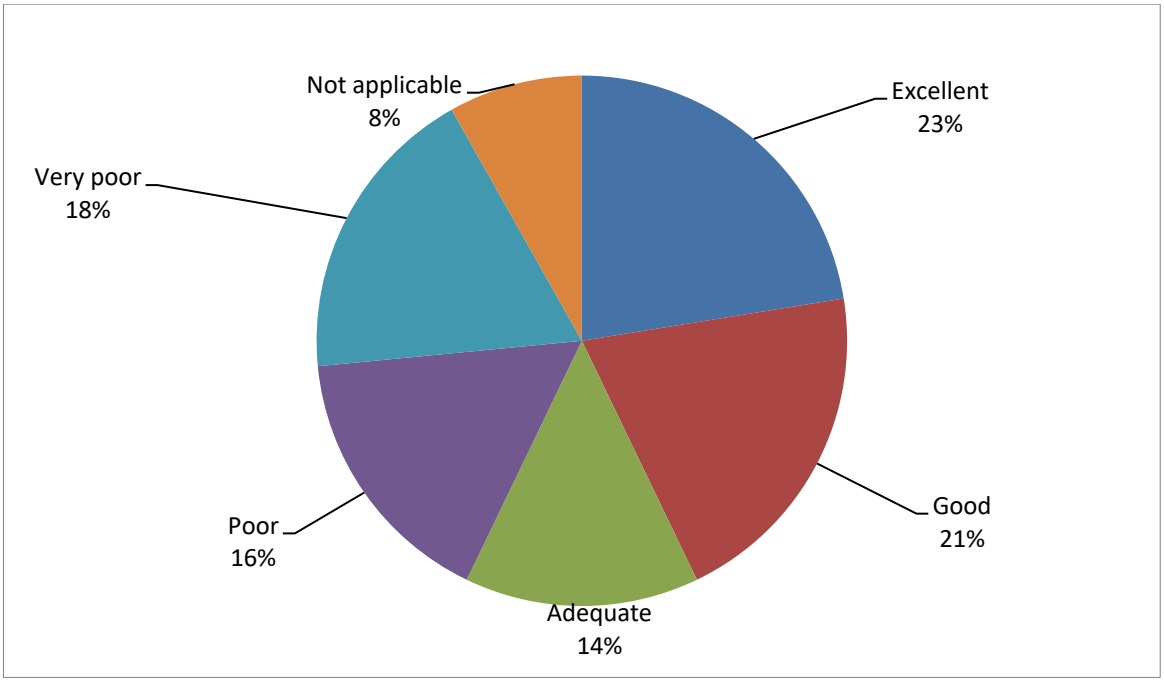


Figure 6.27: Non-KAU students: How would you rate the final outcome?

In the case of the non-KAU student responses (shown in Figure 6.27), however, the balance for this item was more markedly positive at 44% (Excellent 23%, *n*=11 and Good 21%, *n*=10) versus negative, which totalled at 34% (Poor 16%,

n=8 and Very Poor 18%, *n*=9). Once again, no discernible pattern emerged in responses by institution that might indicate different rates of student satisfaction. However, the fact that only 14% of the respondents (*n*=7) chose Adequate for this item perhaps suggests that overall student opinion was more polarised on the nature of the final output of the degree programme. These diverse opinions may be related to the range of expectations that students had when entering the course.

6.7.7 Practical application of the translation theories taught (Q11g)

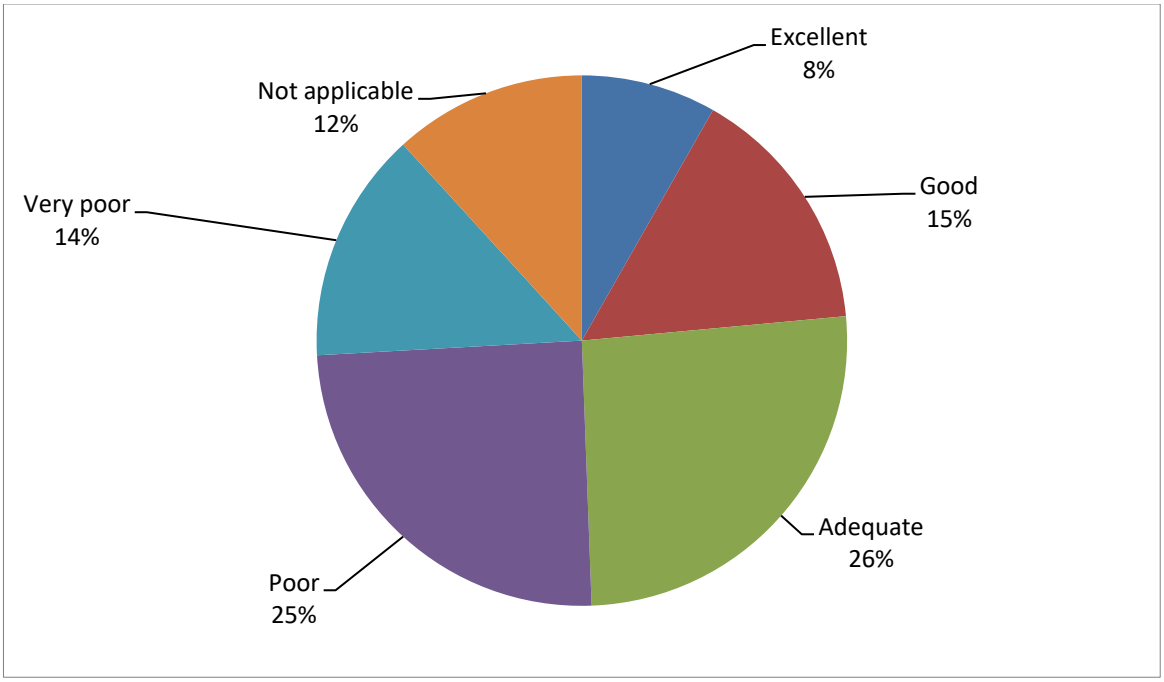


Figure 6.29: KAU students: How would you rate the practical application of the translation theories taught?

Students were then asked to reflect on the practical application of the translation theories that had featured in the course in practice. However, the wording of this item may have been ambiguous. It is possible that students thought about the immediate practical application of translation theory in the language classroom. Alternatively, students may have judged this item in relation to the perceived

practical application of the theory in relation to a broader professional context. As with some previous items, responses can be cross-checked against items elsewhere on the questionnaire to provide further insights.

In this instance, as Figure 6. shows, the percentage of those expressing negative opinions on this topic, a total of 39% (Poor 25%, *n*=21 and Very Poor 14%, *n*=12), outweighed the 23% expressing positive opinions (Excellent 8%, *n*=7 and Good 15%, *n*=13). Although 26% (*n*=22) chose Adequate, the level of student satisfaction for this item still fell to 49%, the lowest thus far for KAU students.

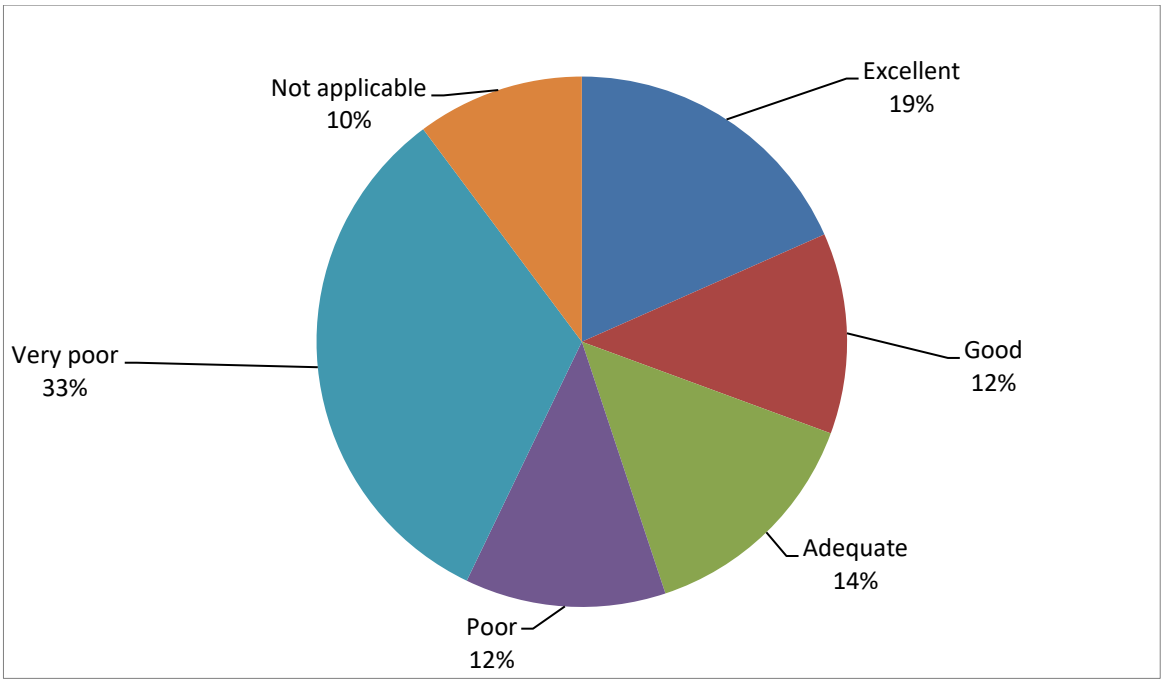


Figure 6.28: Non-KAU students: How would you rate the practical application of the translation theories taught?

This item also recorded the lowest percentage, 45%, of student satisfaction among non-KAU respondents. 19% (*n*=9) rated the practical application of the translation theories taught in the course as Excellent, a further 12% (*n*=6) as Good, and 14% (*n*=7) as Adequate. Yet the same quantity of students, 45%, indicated negative opinions on this topic, with 12% (*n*=6) categorising the element as Poor and 33% (*n*=16) giving it the lowest possible rating, suggesting that that they felt there was very little connection between theory and practice. Again, no obvious pattern arose across the institutions for negative or positive ratings in responses from non-KAU students. As with previous items, this lack of patterns prompts one to wonder what factors are responsible for producing such diverse opinions among individuals studying the same degree course. This diversity may be at least partially explained by the fact that the students surveyed may have been at different stages of their degree programme.

6.7.8 Preparation for work as a professional translator (Q11h)

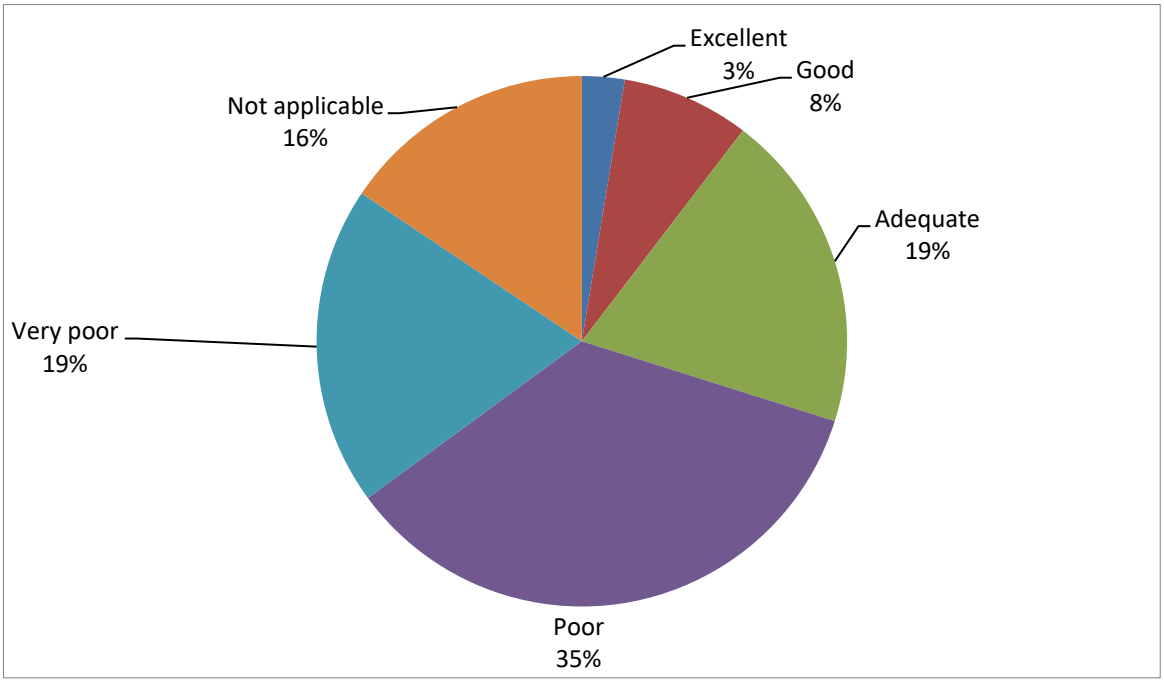


Figure 6.29: KAU students: How would you rate preparation for work as a professional translator?

The next item was intended to measure respondents' views on the extent to which their degree course was preparing them for work as a professional translator. When evaluating these student responses, it may be helpful to compare them to answers given elsewhere on the questionnaire (Q15) that provide insights into students' understanding of what is currently required by the job market in Saudi Arabia as this understanding is likely to have informed students' opinions on this topic. Given that non-KAU students appeared to have a somewhat more informed appreciation of the specific skill set professional translation might require, it will be interesting to see if this understanding is reflected in the profile of answers produced by these two groups of respondents.

The results suggest that KAU respondents are overwhelmingly pessimistic about the extent to which the course prepares graduates to work as professional translators. As Figure 6.29 illustrates, only 30% of respondents were satisfied overall with this aspect of the course, and of these respondents, the greatest percentage rated the course Adequate (19%, *n*=15). Just 8% (*n*=6) believed they were well prepared for professional translation, and only 3% (*n*=2) felt they had received Excellent preparation for this career pathway.

On the other hand, over half the non-KAU respondents (see Figure 6.30), 54%, expressed negative opinions in relation to this item, rating their preparation to work specifically as translators as Poor (35%, *n*=27) or Very Poor (19%, *n*=15). It should be remembered in this context that the KAU course is not currently

described as being vocationally oriented or designed to produce graduates ready to seek employment as professional translators. In fact, the norm for most companies operating in this sector and for international organisations is to require potential employees to have specialist postgraduate qualifications. However, in practice, any Saudi national wishing to offer their services as a freelance translator would be at liberty to do so in the Kingdom. As Fatani (2009) notes, Saudis wishing to become licensed translators simply need to register with the Ministry of Commerce. At present, the Ministry of Commerce where staff are unable to verify the suitability of examinations and certification systems for translators in all specialties.

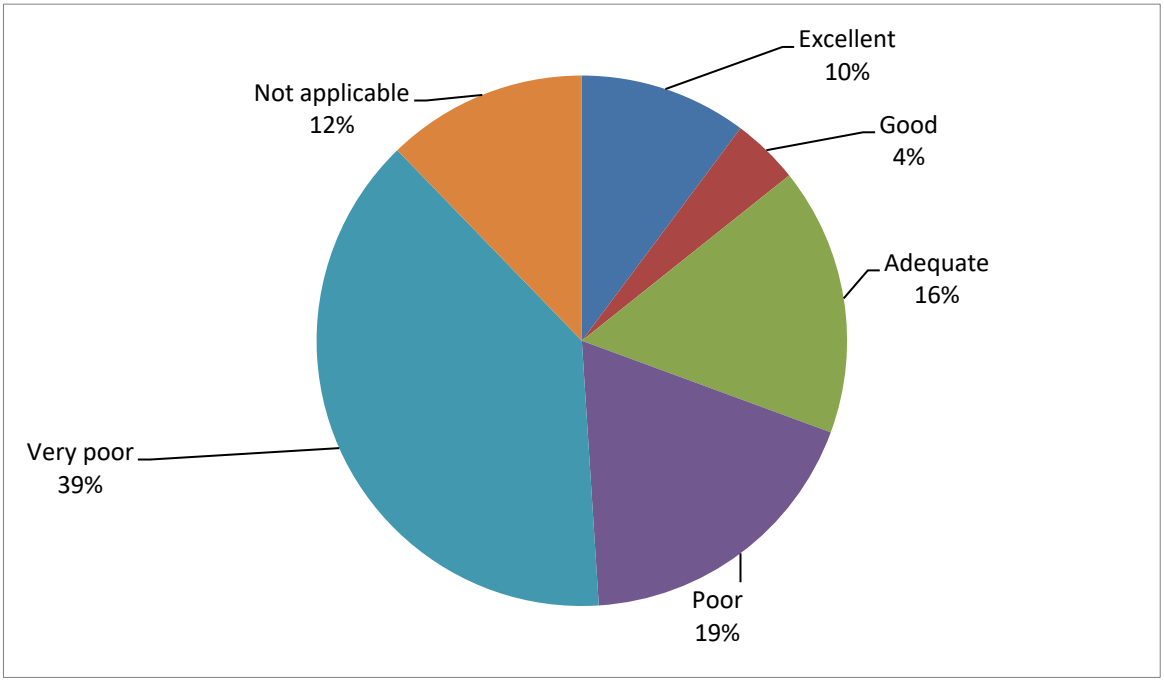


Figure 6.30: Non-KAU students: How would you rate preparation for work as a professional translator?

As shown in figure 6.33, levels of satisfaction in relation to this item were even lower in the case of respondents studying at institutions other than KAU. 19% (*n*=9) expressed the opinion that they were poorly prepared to work as professional translators, with a further 39% (*n*=19) feeling that the level of this preparation was Very Poor. Only 14% were positive in relation to this item, categorising the preparation they had received as Good (4%, *n*=2) or Excellent (10%, *n*=5). Given that a further 16% (*n*=8) described this aspect of the course as Adequate, the total student satisfaction level came to just 30%. For the first time, there was a noticeable preponderance in the negative responses from two particular institutions: KSU (Poor= 4, Very Poor=3) and AIU (Poor=2, Very Poor=6). Again, this result merits further investigation in light of the other responses from non-KAU students relating to other aspects of the course. Further detailed discussion of these findings and their implications for this research follows in Chapter 8.

6.7.9 IT skills acquired for translation (Q11i)

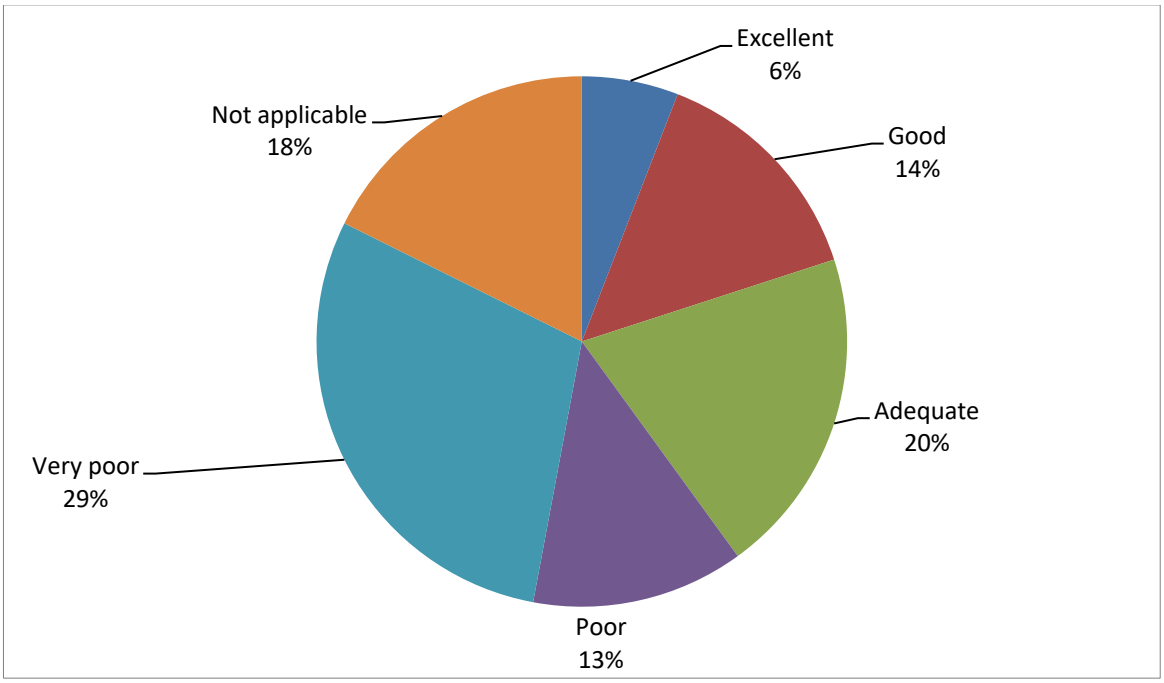


Figure 6.31: KAU students: How would you rate IT skills acquired for translation?

The final item focused specifically on IT skills in the context of translation and the level to which respondents felt they had acquired these skills during their course. In the results for this item (see Figure 6.31), the 'Not applicable' category was relatively large (18%, *n*=15); greater use of 'Not applicable' in this case may have been due to students being uncertain about what this component involves. However, the remaining 82% of the respondents felt able to express an opinion on this aspect of the course. Negative opinions far outweighed positive ones, with 42% of respondents categorising this element of their studies as Poor (13%, *n*=11) or Very Poor (29%, *n*=25), as opposed to 20% rating it as Good (14%, *n*=12) or Excellent (6%, *n*=5). When combined with a score of 20% (*n*=17) for Adequate, the result was still a satisfaction rate of only 40%.

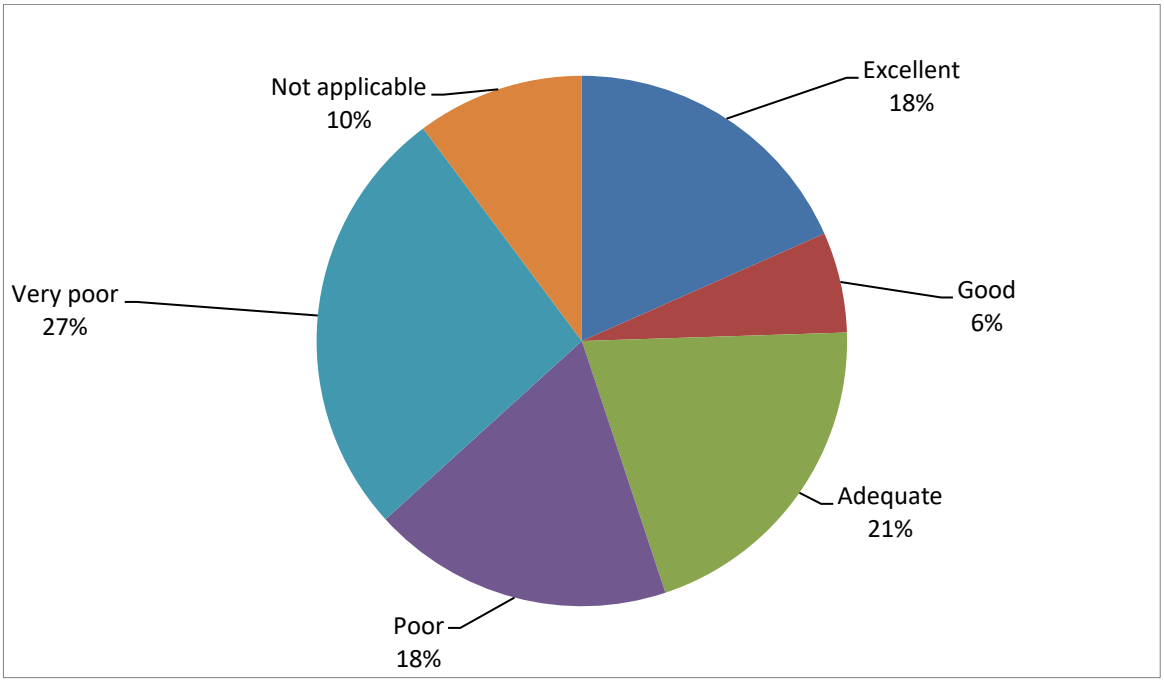


Figure 6.32: Non-KAU students: How would you rate IT skills acquired for translation?

Rates of dissatisfaction for this item were even higher for non-KAU students as Figure 6.32 illustrates, who categorised the level of translation-related IT skills they had acquired as Poor (18%, *n*=9) or Very Poor (27%, *n*=13), at a total of 45% negative responses. However, at the opposite extreme, 18% (*n*=9) categorised their IT skills as Excellent and 6% (*n*=3) categorised them as Good. Overall, though, with an Adequate rating of 21% (*n*=10), the satisfaction rating came to 45%. As was the case for most of the other questionnaire items, no obvious patterns emerged on an institutional basis from the non-KAU respondents.

These results are generally disconcerting given that "translation is a very IT-driven profession these days" (National Network for Translation: online). However, based on my own experience, these responses are fairly representative of the level of Saudi students' IT skills overall. The Saudi government's concern about inadequate IT skills led it to launch the *Maharat min Google* (Skills in Google) programme in 2018, a joint initiative between the MiSK Foundation and Google to deliver a certified programme designed to equip 100,000 Saudi students with the digital skills they need to become entrepreneurs.

Rosemary Mackenzie and Jaen Vienne (2000: 127) stress that "the ability to acquire, manage and utilise resources is part of the translator's competence and should be taught and practiced systemically during training". Translators need to be able to use email and a wide range of general and specialised software for

word processing, file formatting, designing spreadsheets, searching terminology databases, using translation memory tools, desktop publishing, and accessing online resources. Moreover, "software develops fast and translators need to be able to keep up" (National Network for Translation: online). Questionnaire findings for this item indicate that this area needs urgent attention if students are to be adequately equipped to operate as professional translators which will be discussed in recommendations (see Section 8.3.1).

It could be argued that the following questionnaire item acts as a summary of a number of the elements in Item 11. Namely, the following item asks for opinions about the final output of the course, the balance of practice versus theory in course content, and the extent to which this course prepares students for work as a professional translator. Since the item also allows respondents to comment on their reasons for their answer, the responses provide useful insights. These insights concern not only how students perceive the practical usefulness of the content of the course but also students' understanding of what skills and knowledge are required to work as a professional translator in the current Saudi job market.

> Q12. Do you think the content of current modules will qualify you to be a professional translator? Please give reasons for your opinion.

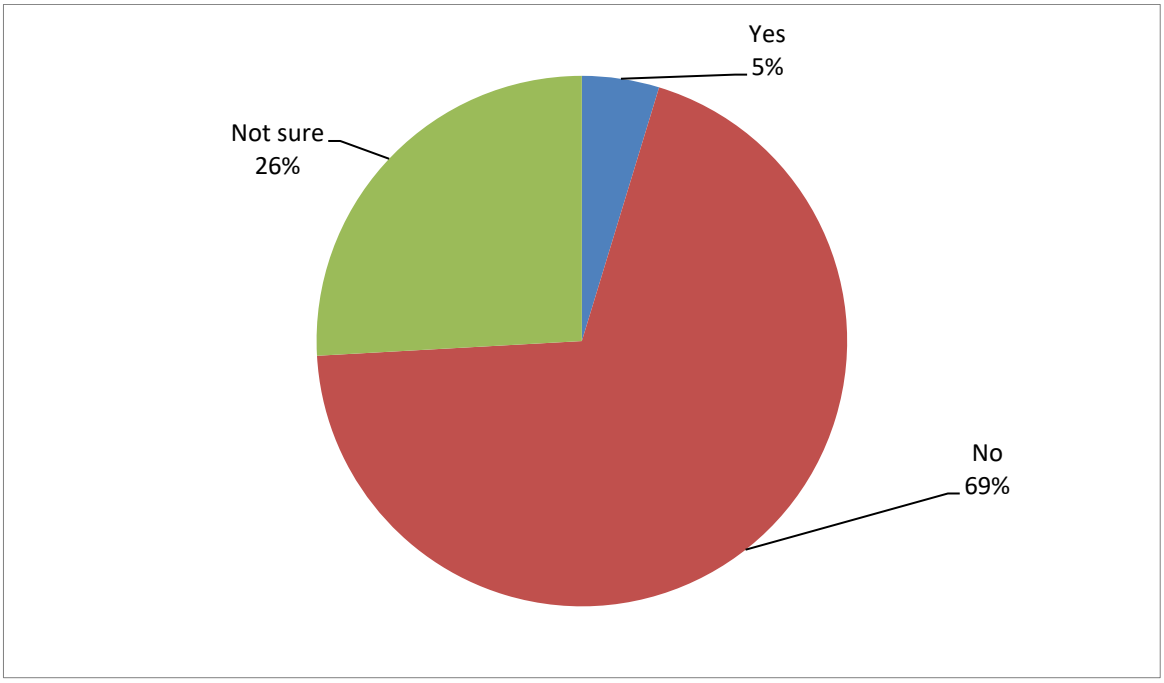


Figure 6.33: KAU students: Do you think the content of current modules will qualify you to be a professional translator?

As Figure 6.33 shows, only 5% of the KAU students surveyed (*n*=4) thought that the content of the current modules would qualify them to become professional translators. 26% (*n*=22) indicated that they were not sure. The largest group of respondents, 69% (*n*=59), did not think that the current content of the modules they had studied would qualify them to work as a translator in a professional capacity.

This profile of results reflects the previous results in elements of Item 11 to the extent that the vast majority of respondents do not think that the content of current modules will qualify them to work as professional translators. The fact that just over a quarter of the respondents were unsure about this item may

suggest that students do not necessarily have a clear idea of the skills and abilities that are required to work in this field.

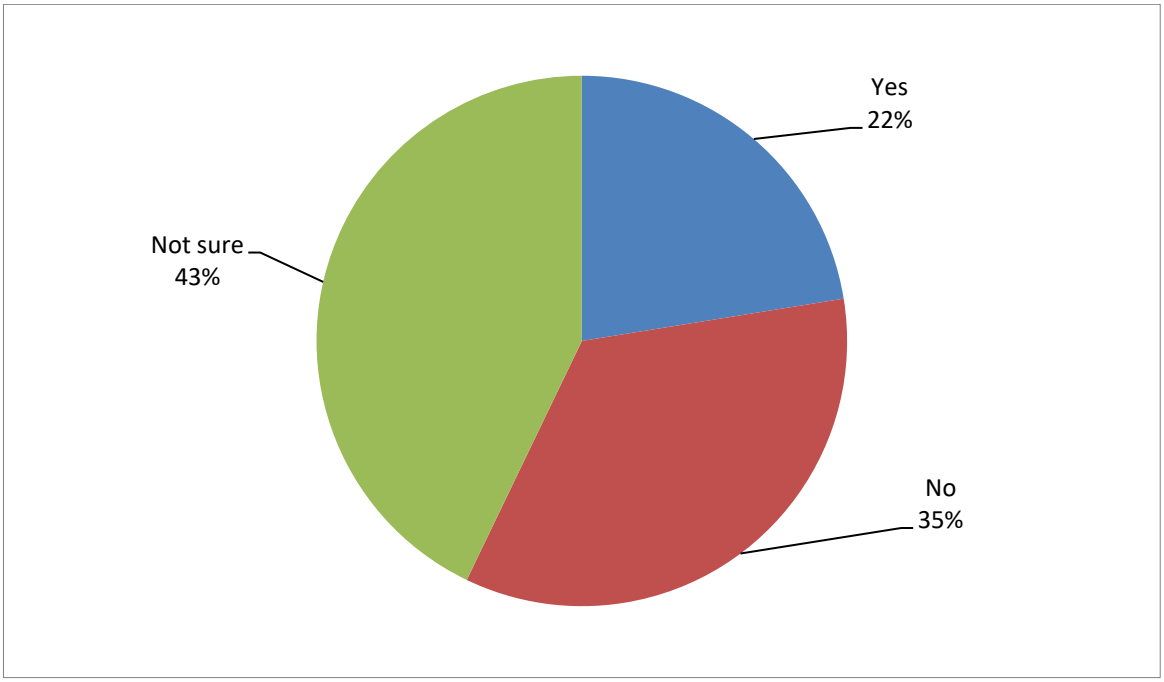


Figure 6.34: Non-KAU students: Do you think the content of current modules will qualify you to be a professional translator?

In the case of the non-KAU respondents, the pattern of responses was very different (see Figure 6.34). 22% (*n*=11) indicated that they thought the content of the course would qualify them to work in the field of professional translation while 35% (*n*=17) expressed the opposite opinion. Previously in item 11, the division between students who thought their degree programme had prepared them to work as professional translators and those who did not had similarly been more weighted towards negative responses. The major difference in this item is the large quantity of students, 43% (*n*=21), who indicated that they were not sure whether they would be adequately prepared or not.

The overall profile of results from these two samples of students in terms of the content of their courses and the skills that the students feel they have developed suggests that the students are accurate in their assessment of the extent to which their university learning experience equips them to consider employment as a professional translator.

In order to better understand some of the bigger issues underpinning some of these responses by the students, it is important to consider some of the specific features of EFL teaching and learning in the Saudi university sector. Syed (2003) identified a range of challenges faced by those teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf States. These challenges included students' lack of motivation and low levels of achievement, an overwhelming emphasis on memorisation and rote learning (even at tertiary level), and an assessment system that is overly dependent on pass or fail testing.

A decade later, Iqbal Darandari and Anne Murphy (2013) observed that teaching was still being shaped by the exam. Namely, the Saudi system of teaching EFL

> forces students to focus on their marks and grades, rather than on the actual process of learning. It defines the curriculum around the assessment rather than the learning processes. Furthermore, traditional assessment methods may cause surface learning and can result in increased anxiety for students. (Darandari and Murphy, 2013: 64).

Teachers are expected to follow the specified curriculum very closely, and there is little acknowledgement that teacher–learner interaction in the classroom forms a significant part of the teaching and learning process (Liton, 2012). In Saudi Arabia, this oversight is linked to a widespread mistaken perception of teaching as "only being about the simple delivery of information" (Loughran and Russell, 2007: 219).

In their study, Christo Moskovsky and Fakieh Alrabai (2009) found that the sample of Saudi EFL instructors they surveyed demonstrated a significant lack of motivation and enthusiasm for their work, which may help to explain some of the negative evaluations of teaching by the student respondents. However, Moskovsky and Alrabai (2009) concluded that one of the major reasons for teachers feeling demotivated and unenthusiastic was the fact that EFL as a subject is viewed negatively by both management and students.

In her more recent qualitative study, Amani Alghamdi (2017: 72)—herself a university EFL teacher—conducted interviews, focus group discussions, and classroom observations with a small group of Saudi EFL university teachers with different career profiles and lengths of teaching experience. Her focus, like much of the EFL research in the Saudi context, was on EFL in the obligatory foundation year for all university students. However, students' learning experiences in the foundation year in all subjects will shape student attitudes for the rest of their university studies. Therefore, many of the points she makes are relevant to the findings and recommendations in this thesis.

In Alghamdi's (2017) discussions with university teachers, she explored the realities of EFL teaching and learning in the Saudi tertiary education sector. She found that

> early on they were motivated by a passion for language teaching, an eagerness to share their knowledge of language learning and development – however, the realities of their classroom experiences and the time crunch[36] changed their practices and moved them toward implementing the curriculum in order to achieve exam "success" for their students. (Alghamdi, 2017: 72)

According to Thomas Guskey (2000), when teachers perceive what they are doing negatively, students' learning outcomes are also negatively affected. Teachers' individual sense of professionalism towards their work can be affected by a range of factors: working conditions, personal goals and attitudes, and even the career opportunities that they feel are available to them in their educational context (Richards and Lockhart, 1994: 40).

The first of these, working conditions, can refer to the actual environment in which teachers operate and to the resources available to support both student and staff learning. The university teachers in Alghamdi's (2017: 101) study

[36] Alghamdi (2017) noted that different types of time issues cause problems for EFL teachers. Firstly, teachers sometimes have to complete whole modules within eight weeks even though students' allocation to groups can take up to three weeks. Secondly, in the case of female students, transport issues can mean that some students frequently arrive late to classes, causing disruption. Some students even persistently arrive late without any excuse, as they know there is no sanction that can be imposed on them. Thirdly, EFL classes can be timetabled to last for a stretch of up to four hours, with just two short breaks of 20 minutes each (Alghamdi, 2017: 86); it is impossible to maintain the attention of even the best students for this length of time. Finally, lack of time also prevents instructors from "collaborating, reflecting and allocating necessary time in class planning to respond to students' needs" (Alghamdi, 2017: 118-119).

identified the "lack of appropriate resources and facilities (in particular, physical space, Internet access; and the library" as something that negatively affected EFL teaching and learning. Examples they gave included classrooms with fixed seating, which made it very difficult for students to engage in groupwork activities, and a library that had not been designed to cope with the growing student numbers currently feeding through the system.

Beyond the physical environment, Alghamdi (2017: ii) highlighted broader concerns that relate to power, policies, and the lack of voice for teachers within Saudi Arabia's highly restrictive educational system. She argued that "top-down hierarchies and power structures are so well established that this prevents any teacher-initiated change to education" (Alghamdi, 2017: 18). Ahmed Sibahi (2015: 347) had previously noted that the lack of flexibility in EFL programmes delivered at universities impacts negatively on teachers' performance; specifically, teachers are not allowed to use their knowledge, creativity, or decision-making powers as practitioners. Alghamdi (2017: 124) reported that in the institution where she conducted her research, teachers were asked to present their opinions during a formal meeting held at the end of each EFL module; however, there was no evidence that any of the difficulties they raised or suggestions for improvements that they had put forward fed into any curriculum development or implementation processes, meaning that their voices are completely absent since this meeting is the only time they are consulted. Guskey (2000) argues that it is imperative for teachers to be actively involved in curriculum planning because teachers will be expected to play a key role in

implementing the changes required to existing provision and to ensuring successful learning outcomes for their students.

Failing to involve teachers can have a negative impact, particularly if teachers feel they are being pressured into adopting new techniques for teaching EFL for which they have neither the required skills nor the personal enthusiasm to implement; older practitioners in particular often view new developments as simply the latest passing fads for the authorities (Al-Naqbi, 2011).

6.8 Future Plans

This section of the questionnaire focused on the respondents' plans following graduation.

Q14. Are you considering doing a Masters degree in translation?

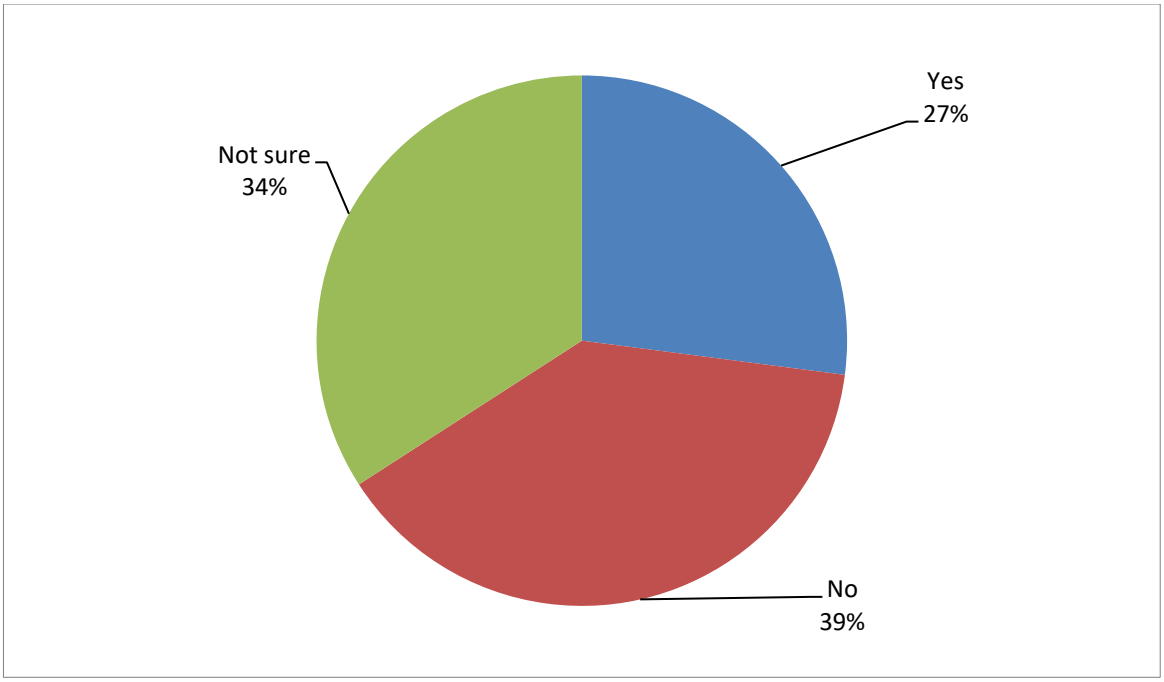


Figure 6.35: KAU students: Are you considering doing a Masters degree in translation?

As Figure 6.35 shows, 34% (*n*=29) of respondents were not sure about their future study plans at the time of being surveyed, and a further 39% (*n*=33) indicated that they were not intending to continue on to postgraduate studies. However, 27% (*n*=23) responded that they were considering doing a postgraduate degree that focused on translation.

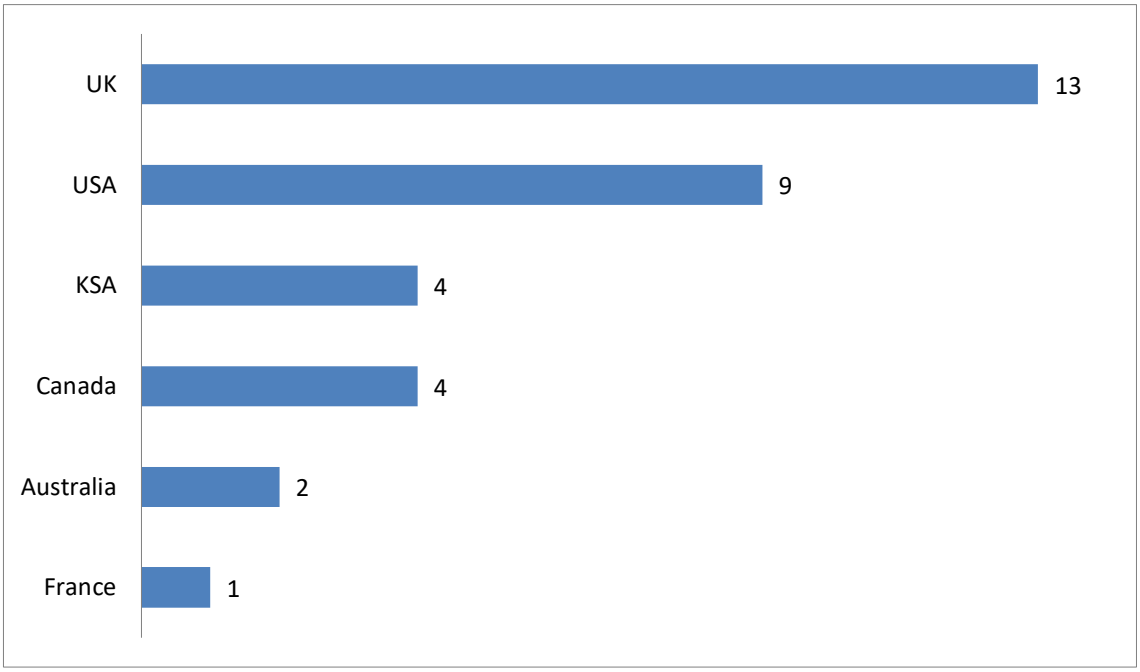


Figure 6.36: KAU students: Preferred destinations for postgraduate study

For those KAU respondents who expressed an opinion about their preferred destination for pursuing postgraduate studies in translation, the UK was considered to be the most popular destination and received a total of 13 mentions, followed by the USA. Only one respondent gave a reason for their choice, stating that the UK was preferred "because translation courses are stronger there" (KAU72S). Two other English-speaking countries were mentioned: Canada and Australia. Four students stated their intentions to pursue

postgraduate studies in KSA, with two students specifying KSU (KAU14S) and another Jeddah (KAU78S). It is unclear why one respondent identified France as a possible destination for postgraduate study when the survey was completed by students studying English as a major.[37]

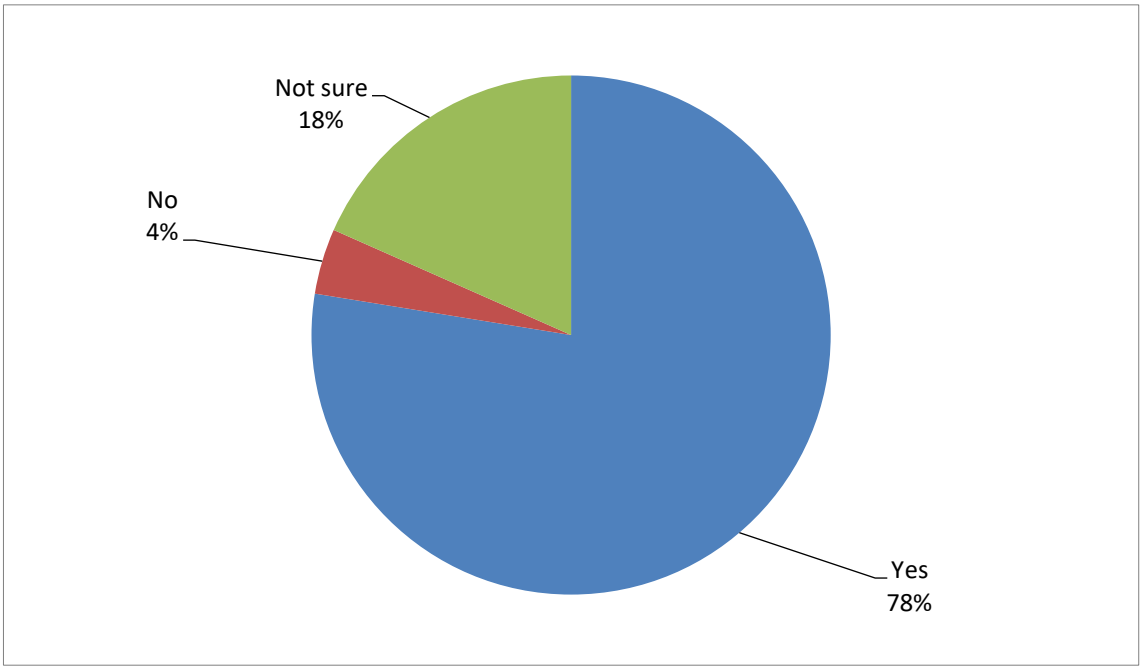


Figure 6.37: Non-KAU students: Are you considering doing a Masters degree in translation?

The overwhelming majority of non-KAU students, 78% (*n*=38), indicated that they were thinking about undertaking postgraduate studies in translation. Another 18% (*n*=9) were not sure at the time of completing the questionnaire. Only 4% (*n*=2) indicated that they did not have any intentions of pursuing further study in the field of translation.

[37] All EFL majors usually study French as a minor and typically achieve a low level of competence in this language. However, it is possible that this student already had prior experience with this language that allowed her to consider postgraduate study in France.

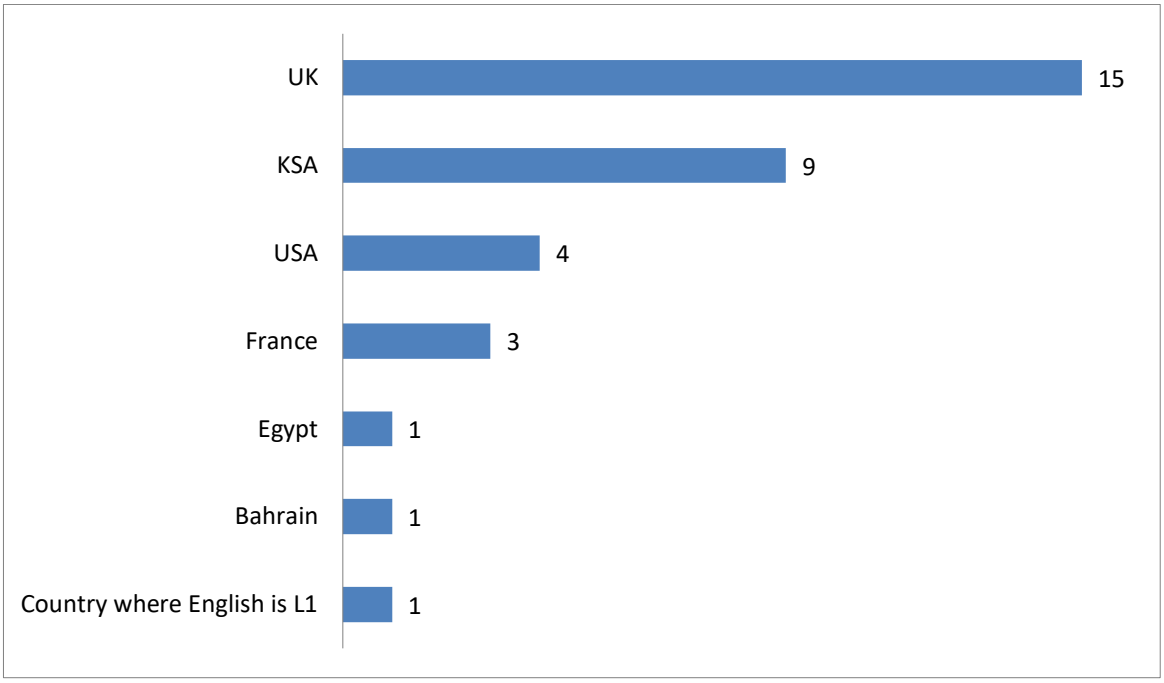


Figure 6.38: Non-KAU students: Preferred destinations for postgraduate study

As Figure 6.38 shows, among non-KAU students, the UK was the most popular destination for postgraduate study with 15 mentions. Students stated they would opt for the UK mainly based on the quality of its courses (KSU10S, KAR1S, KAR5S) and because English was the first language there (KKU1S, KAR5S, AIU6S). Other factors influencing this decision included the range of choices it offered (KSU10S), tutor recommendation (KSU2S), and the fact it was "the only country that offers a postgraduate degree in interpreting" (PNU8S). Another student simply wanted to study in a country "where English is first language" (SEU1S).

The second most popular choice was to pursue postgraduate studies in KSA (*n*=9), with two students specifying Riyadh (KAR3S, PNU2S). Three others stated

their intentions to progress to postgraduate study at their current institution (AIU1S, PNU5S, SEU1). Some four students mentioned the USA, with two giving their reasons as "to improve my language" (PNU6S) and "lots of options to choose from" (TAU1S).

The three other locations mentioned were the neighbouring Gulf State of Bahrain "because it is only a short distance from home" (KSU1S), Egypt (*n*=1), and France (*n*=3). As with KAU student responses, it is unclear why three students studying English referred to France as a possible destination for postgraduate study.

These findings may reflect the earlier responses from participants, particularly those studying at KAU, indicating that their current undergraduate programme offered poor preparation for working as a professional translator.

Q15. In which career field do you intend to work? Why?

The next questionnaire item focused specifically on identifying the areas in which students intended to seek employment after graduation. Some students listed several possibilities. The pie charts below (Figure 6.39 and Figure 6.40) accordingly represent simply the number of times each area was mentioned by respondents.

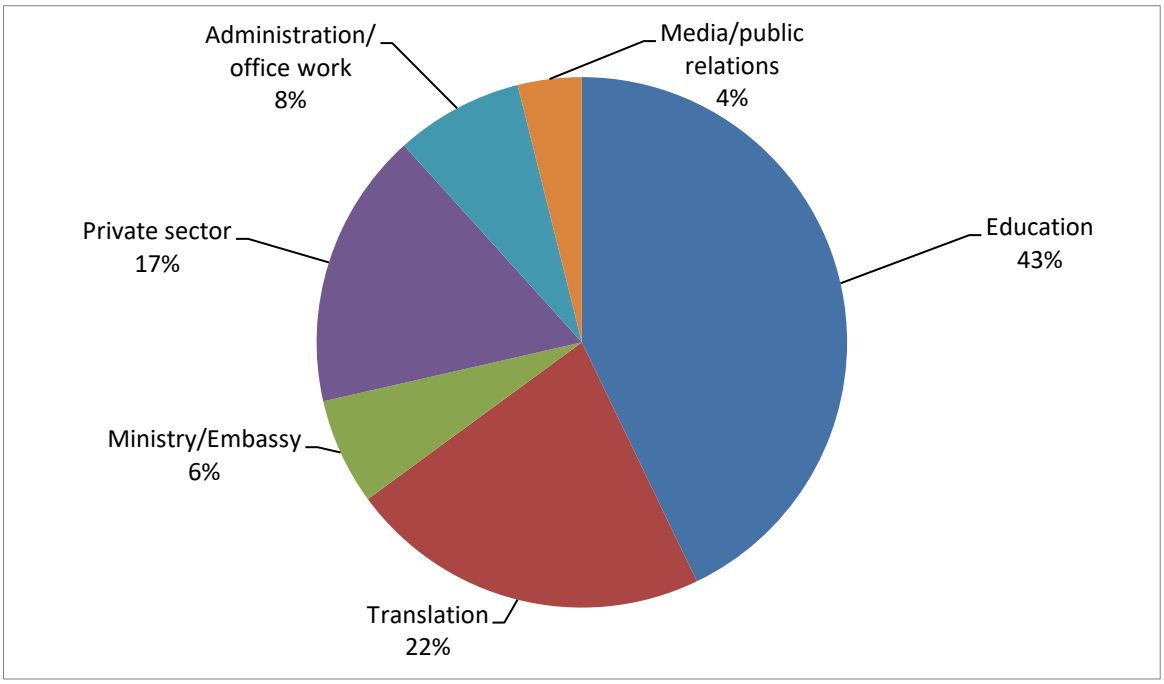


Figure 6.39: KAU students: In which career field do you intend to work?

The most popular choice of career for KAU students was education (33 mentions). A range of reasons were given for this choice including interaction with students (KAU43S) and more job opportunities in this sector (KAU77S). Three students specifically mentioned an interest in teaching in higher education (KAU40S, KAU46S, KAU78S) or in specific subjects, namely literature (KAU1S), English (KAU84S), and linguistics (KAU73S).

The next most popular career destination for KAU graduates was translation (17 mentions). Reasons for this choice included financial reasons (KAU24S) or interest, namely because translation was something the individual enjoyed (KAU35S, KAU56s). Students also mentioned specific fields in translation that

they were interested in pursuing, namely literary (KAU4S, KAU13S, KAU72S, KAU56S) and medical (KAU72S). Only one student specifically used the term 'freelance' in relation to translation (KAU72S) and noted that freelancing was important because the work could be done from home.

Employment in the private sector was the third most popular option at 13 mentions. The main reason given was simply that respondents felt work in the private sector would be interesting. Three specific areas of the public sector were identified as potential areas for employment: banking (KAU27S, KAU39S, KAU71S), civil aviation (KAU48S), and international commerce (KAU19S).

Administration or office work received six mentions, but no reasons were given for this choice, and it was often cited by respondents in a list of other possibilities. Five mentions were made of employment in government ministries or embassies, with one student specifying a job in the Ministry of the Hajj[38] "to use English to help people" (KAU53S). Other respondents were less specific about the type of ministry or location of the embassy, but assumed their work would involve acting as a translator (KAU14S, KAU19S, KAU22S). One student (KAU22S) specified that this type of post would offer a "good future".

[38] The Ministry of Hajj and Umrah is responsible for the handling of all issues relating to the millions of visitors who come to Saudi Arabia annually on pilgrimage to the holy cities of Mecca and the Medina and also for Saudis who visit these cities.

Finally, three respondents mentioned a possible career in the media (KAU45S) or public relations (KAU11S, KAU23S), but did not provide any further comments on the reasons for their choice.

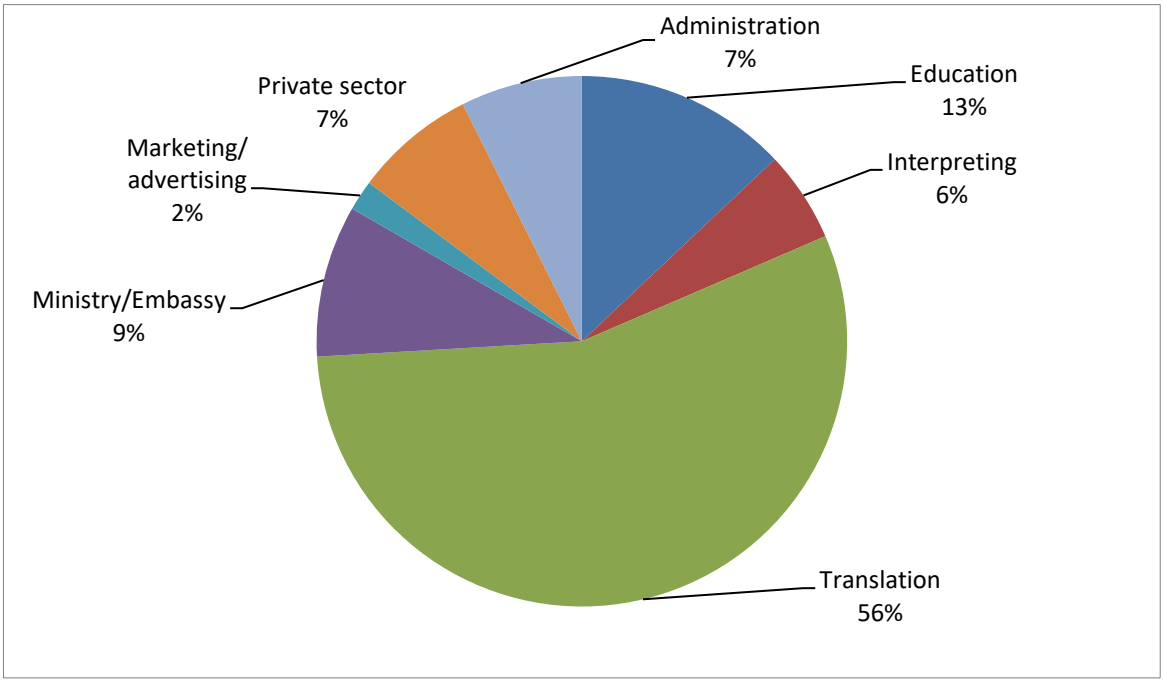


Figure 6.40: Non-KAU students: In which career field do you intend to work?

The results from respondents from other universities showed a marked preference for translation, with 30 mentions, as the principal career destination. One student was already working as a translator (TAU1S). Reasons given for this preference included the level of income translation provided (AIU1S), the fact it is a wide field (SEU3S), and that translation allows individuals to combine an area of specialisation with a personal interest (QU2S, KSU1S). Non-KAU respondents also identified a number of specific fields in translation that they were interested in pursuing, namely financial (PNU6S), legal (AIU2S, KAR6S, PNU6S, PNU8S, QU1S, QU2S, SEU1S), medical (AIU5S, AIU7S KAR6S, KSU6S, KSU10S, PNU3S, PNU8S), literary (QU2S), and subtitling (JU1S, KSU1S). This

range is far broader than that cited by their KAU counterparts. Four students specifically referred to working freelance (KAR4S, KSU2S, KSU4S, PNU1S). Interpreting was also mentioned as a separate career choice by three students (KSU8S, PNU4S, PNU5S).

Education was the next most popular career (7 mentions). Reasons given for this choice included the salary (AIU1S) and that the respondent already had experience in this area (TAU2S). Two students referred to an interest in obtaining posts in higher education to lecture in cultural studies (PNU4S) and translation studies (PNU7S), both new disciplines in Saudi Arabia.

As with KAU respondents, 5 mentions were made to seeking employment in Government Ministries or Embassies, with one student specifying a job in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SEU1S). Another respondent stated that thanks to Saudi Vision 2030,[39] there would likely be much more international contact in the near future, which in turn would mean new roles for English speakers in the Ministries (AIU9S).

[39] Saudi Vision 2030 is the Saudi government's latest national development plan launched in 2016 by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. It is considered to be an ambitious blueprint intended to diversify the Kingdom's economy so that it is no longer economically dependent on oil alone. In its own words, it intends to transform Saudi Arabia into "the heart of the Arab and Islamic worlds, the investment powerhouse, and the hub connecting three continents" (*Vision 2030*, 2016: 9). It is also expected to bring major social changes.

The private sector and administration both received 7 mentions each, but respondents did not add any reasons for these choices. Marketing/advertising was referred to just once, and again, no reasons were provided.

In Chapter 8, these findings are used to form the basis of recommendations regarding changes to course content and the need for placements offering professional experience.

> Q16. In your opinion, what skills are needed to work as a professional translator?

In the next open-ended item, students were asked to reflect on the skills they thought graduates would require in order to work as a professional translator. In this case, when the results from KAU and non-KAU students were analysed, great similarity emerged. Thus, all the common features between both of student groups have been organised here into four categories of elements. Namely, the skills that respondents identified as key for a professional translator fell into one of four categories: language skills, translation skills, knowledge, and employability. These categories are represented below in Figure 6.41-Figure 6.44. The numbers in brackets represent the number of mentions from both KAU and non-KAU students.

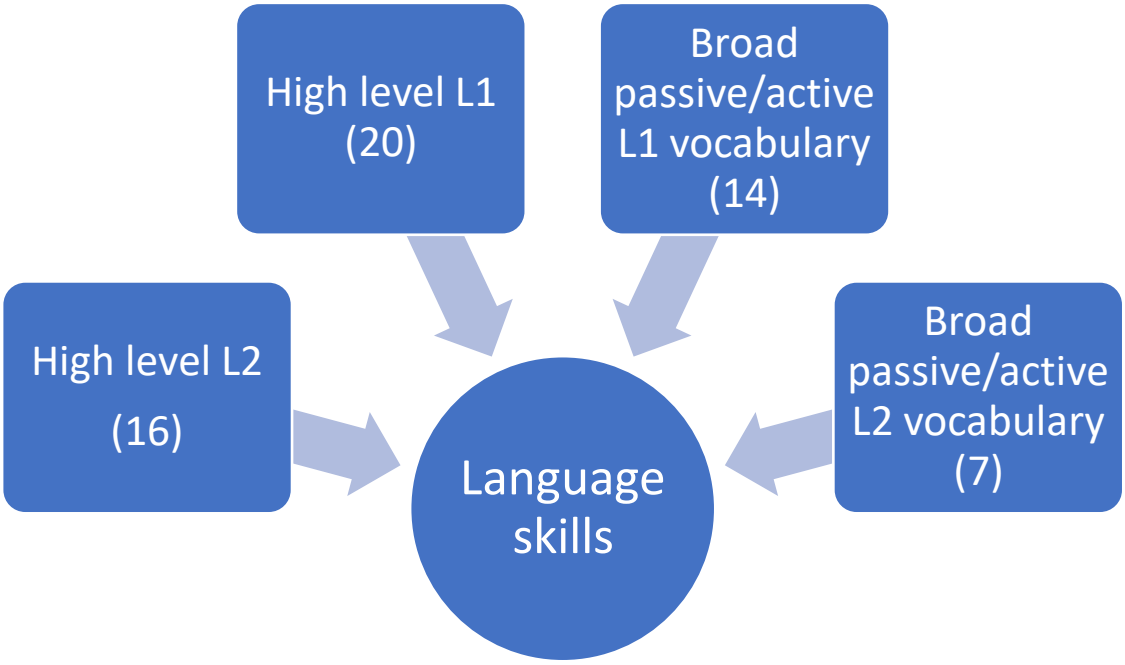


Figure 6.41: Professional translator skills: Language skills

Respondents firstly highlighted the importance of high-level linguistic skills. While there were some 16 mentions for high-level competence in English, which is the second language (L2) for all the students, it was also noted that in addition translators needed to be competent in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the formal written variant of the respondents' mother tongue (L1). Similarly, respondents stressed that it was important for translators to have a broad active and passive vocabulary in both their L2 (7 mentions) and L1 (14 mentions). As noted previously, Saudi translators are expected to work in both L1/L2 and L2/L1 directions.

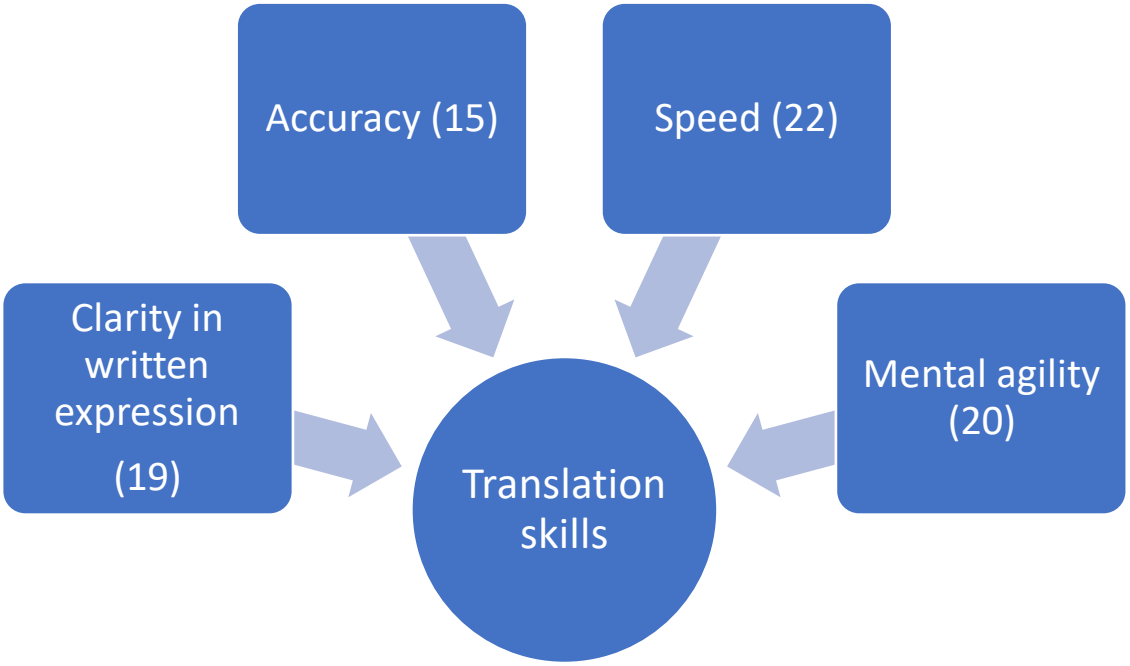


Figure 6.42: Professional translator skills: Translation skills

The second group of elements relate more specifically to the skills that are needed to render ideas written in one language in the source text (ST) into their equivalent in another language in the target text (TT). Respondents identified clarity in written expression (19 mentions) as an essential element in conveying the meaning of the original. Along with clarity, translators must be accurate when conveying the meaning (15 mentions). Regarding mentions of clarity, two students also highlighted the importance of ideally attempting to maintain the style of the ST. Respondents stressed as well as the need for speed, as professional translators must work quickly enough to meet work deadlines (22 mentions). Finally, students thought that professional translators also needed to possess a certain quality that they struggled to name consistently yet nonetheless described as playing a crucial role in enabling the translation process. They described this quality variously as being 'quick-witted', 'smart',

'clever' or 'intuitive'. These ideas have been grouped here under the heading of mental agility (20 mentions).

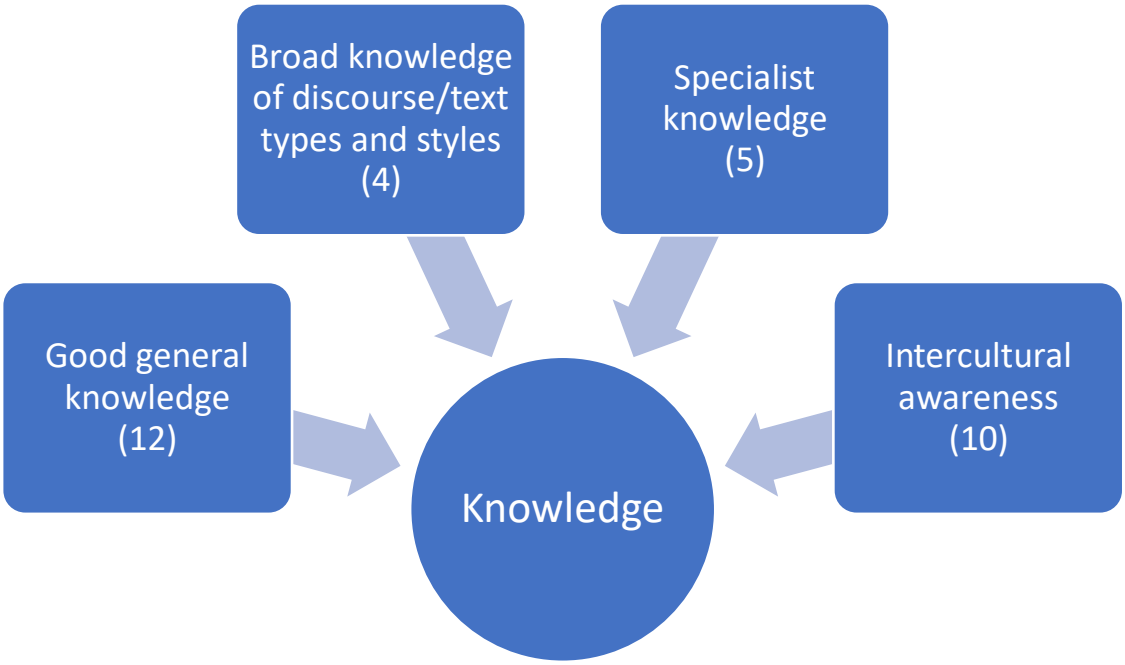


Figure 6.43: Professional translator skills: Knowledge

Respondents also indicated that professional translators needed to possess different types of knowledge in order to perform their job well. At the top of respondents' list was good general knowledge (12 mentions). Respondents also indicated the need for what is typically referred to as 'intercultural awareness' (10 mentions). According to one student, this means "Broad horizons, accepting other cultures, awareness of linguistic and cultural differences from one country to another" (KKU1S). In addition, respondents thought that translators need to have a broad knowledge of different types of discourse (for example, legal, medical) and texts (such as academic articles, business reports) in order to be aware of the conventions that these types of documents follow. Respondents

also noted that translators need to be able to recognise different styles of writing (for example, formal, literary) and ideally able to replicate these styles as well (4 mentions). Finally, students highlighted the need for some in-depth specialist knowledge of a particular field or fields (5 mentions), and one respondent added that this knowledge should be "regularly updated" (KSU6S).

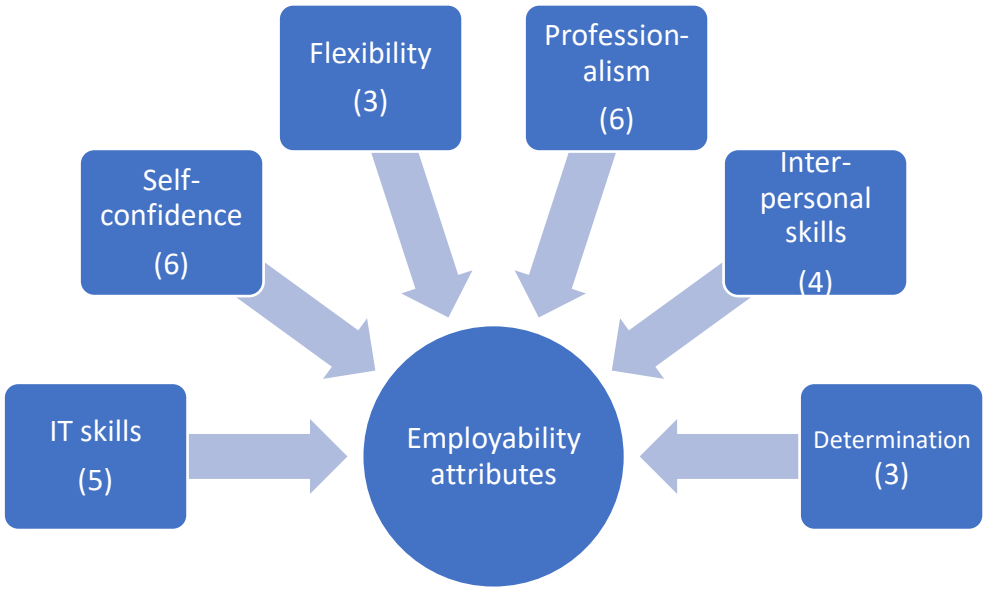


Figure 6.44: Professional translator skills: Employability attributes

A smaller number of students also identified a series of personal qualities and skills that they judged would be important for a translator to gain work and succeed in the professional field. All of these qualities and skills, grouped under the heading of employability attributes, were deemed crucial for an individual hoping to obtain work and survive as a freelance translator. It was surprising and concerning that only five students, all non-KAU students, from the total sample of 134 respondents identified IT skills as important for professional translators. These five students mentioned the need for basic skills including

word processing and e-mailing all the way through to the ability to use sophisticated translation software such as TRADOS (TAU1S: this student previously revealed that s/he is already working as a translator). Another student also emphasised the need for high-quality presentation of work (PNU3S).

Within the category of employability attributes, a subgroup of personal qualities emerged. It was initially difficult to determine why respondents valued these characteristics. However, additional comments made by some individuals helped to clarify respondents' thinking. Self-confidence (6 mentions) is essential for individuals wishing to "market themselves as independent translators" (UQU1S), as are qualities such as determination (3 mentions) and flexibility (3 mentions). Good interpersonal skills (4 mentions) are not only necessary when dealing with clients but also for networking (AIU3S), which can be a useful source of business. The concept of professionalism (6 mentions) was particularly highlighted by KAU students, but comments provided little insight into exactly what was meant by professionalism; in most cases, it seemed to be linked to delivering by agreed deadlines. None of the students mentioned anything related to the possible ethical dimension of professionalism as a translator, such as client confidentiality, for example.

Chapter 8 provides a discussion of the skills identified by the students and those proposed by the National Network for Translation (see "What are the skills required?" Available at

http://www.nationalnetworkfortranslation.ac.uk/resources/what-are-skills-required).

Q19. Does your course include practical training hours (e.g. workshops in translation)?

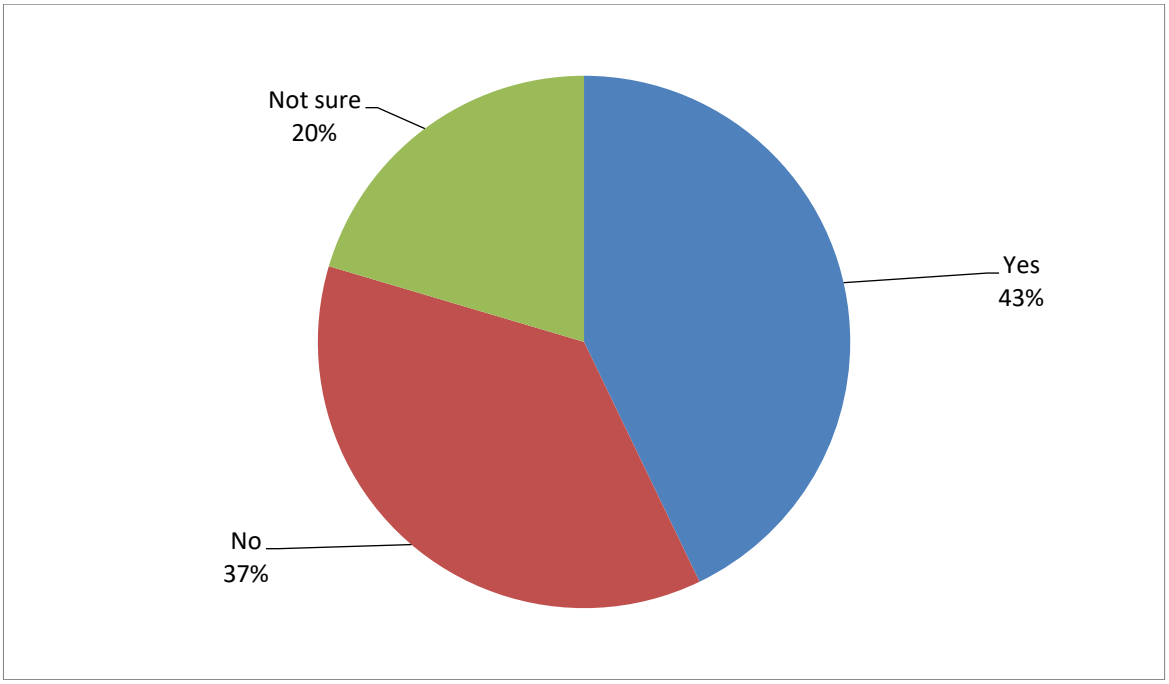


Figure 6.45: Non-KAU students: Does your course include any elements of practical training (e.g. workshops in translation)?

This item did not appear on the KAU questionnaire since this university does not currently offer any practical training elements. According to the answers, 43% (*n*=21) of respondents indicated that the course they attended did include elements of practical training while 37% (*n*=18) responded negatively. The remaining 20% (*n*=10) were not sure whether practical training elements were included or not. However, analysis of the responses by institution showed that there was a lack of consistency in the answers of respondents from AIU and KSU, with some answering yes and others answering no. This inconsistency makes it difficult to judge the validity of these responses.

Q20. Do you think it would be useful to offer an optional internship module for students who are interested in becoming translators? Why?

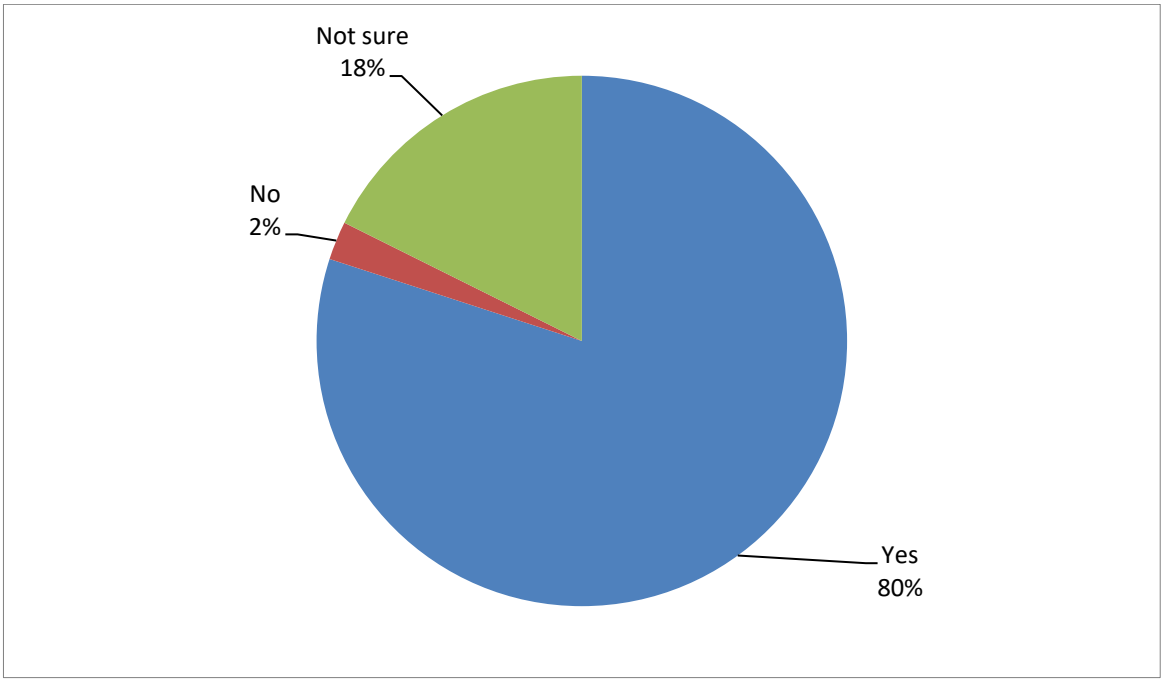


Figure 6.46: KAU students: Do you think it would be useful to offer an optional internship module for students who are interested in becoming translators?

The suggestion of offering an optional internship module for those with an interest in becoming translators was supported by 80% (*n*=68) of the students following the programme at KAU. Just 2% (*n*=2) were not in favour of this suggestion. A further 18% (*n*=15) were undecided about the usefulness of offering an optional internship module to KAU students.

With regard to the reasons why an internship would be useful, nine KAU students commented that since the current translation module does not match the requirements of the job market, training of this kind via an internship would be the only way to learn about and practise the professional skills needed to

work in this field before starting their career. In addition, 13 students mentioned that an internship would allow students to gain general experience of the kind of working environment they would be likely to encounter in the future. Nine students mentioned that it would prepare students for the translation job market by giving them the chance to choose a specialism. Another group of students emphasised that the intensive language practice gained during an internship would improve students' translation skills and linguistic knowledge (15 students). Two students specifically commented that they believed being in a professional context would help students to identify and improve their weaknesses in English. Another student indicated that in addition to linguistic skills, an internship would also help to improve self-confidence.

Finally, two students agreed that an internship would be useful, but stated that it should remain optional and that any students who successfully completed one should be provided with a separate translation training certificate.

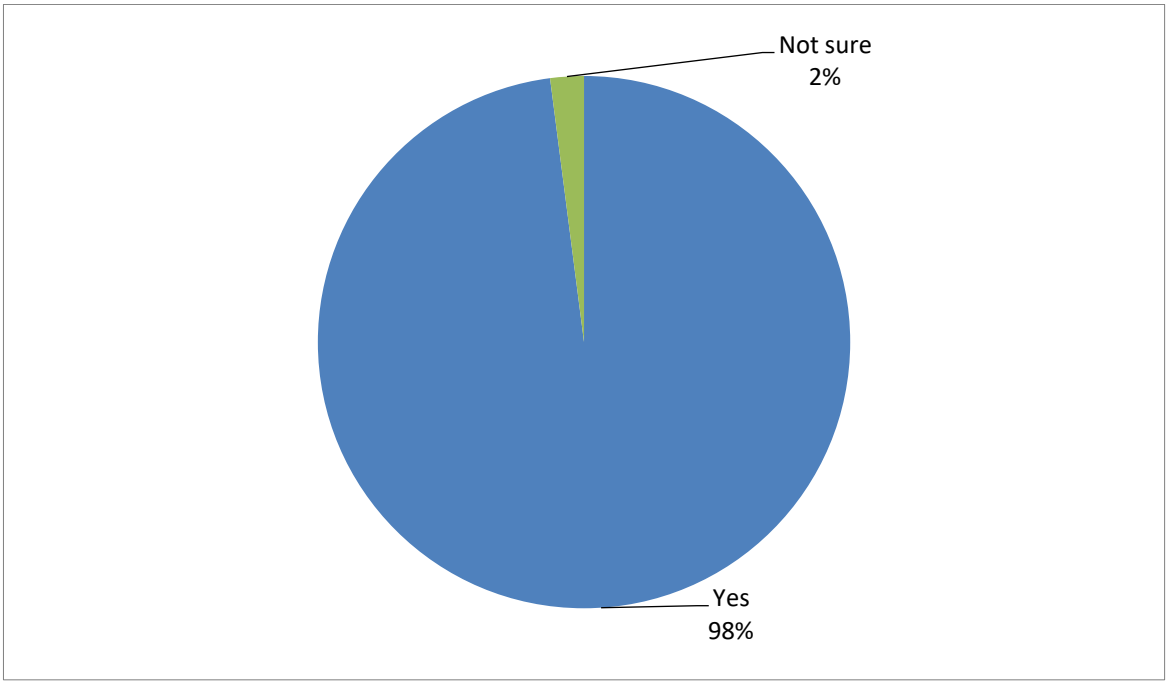


Figure 6.47: Non-KAU students: Do you think it would be useful to offer an optional internship module for students who are interested in becoming translators?

Students attending institutions other than KAU were virtually unanimous in their support for the idea of offering an optional internship module for those planning to work in the translation field, with a total of 98% (*n*=47) of respondents supporting this proposal. The remaining 2% (*n*=1) of students indicated that they were not sure.

Non-KAU students made many similar points in relation to this question. Many of the students highlighted that their university translation courses did not prepare them adequately for the requirements of the job market for translators. As such, they felt that an internship could offer professional training that would help students acquire the skills necessary for this form of employment (three

students) and give students a realistic understanding of the nature of this career (eight students).

Non-KAU students also indicated that an internship would offer students a period of intensive language practice (six students) that would help students to polish their translation skills (three students) and expand their vocabulary quickly (KSU2S). Working with other professional translators would help students to identify and work on eliminating any weaknesses in their linguistic competence (AIU4S). The idea that an internship would help improve self-confidence was also mentioned by three non-KAU students. Finally, two students mentioned the importance of being able to apply theory to practice and thought an internship would offer students this opportunity (KKU1S, KSU11S).

6.9 Cross-Institutional Themes

Unlike the other sections of this chapter, where the emphasis is on comparative analysis of KAU and non-KAU responses, this section offers a synthesis of the analysis of the responses from what were originally three separate questionnaire items:

> Q13. In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses in the current provision?
>
> Q18. In your opinion, how can the course be improved?

Q22. Do you have any suggestions regarding the translation modules or the course in general?

An attempt has been made to identify common cross-institutional themes that emerged in responses to these open-ended questions. Analysing the answers given by students revealed many similarities in students' suggestions concerning improvements; some of these suggestions may point to shortcomings in approaches taken to teaching translation while others highlight broader issues within the Saudi university sector. These points are compared in the next chapter with themes which occur in the literature and with results from the staff questionnaire. Where useful, student feedback from another national context, namely the United Kingdom, is used for comparison as well. Some institution-specific points that are thought to merit consideration are also mentioned here.

6.9.1 Improving the teaching of translation

Similarities were apparent in the students' comments on the need to improve the quality of the teaching regarding the elements of the course that are translation-related. A small number of students described the teachers involved in teaching translation as helpful or encouraging (n=7). However, criticism of university tutors teaching this subject was much more frequent. Students highlighted a lack of appropriate qualifications, skills, and experience, and emphasised that teachers employed poor teaching methods and approaches:

> ”Translation should be taught by a specialised tutor, not someone with expertise in linguistics or literature.” (KAR6S)

> “Incompetent tutors […] do not discuss mistakes with students or how to improve their work. They just think about assessment, not teaching good translation skills.” (OTH2S)

> ”It all depends on the tutor and his/her ability to deliver the information, to help students to translate with practice which will help them to build confidence in translation choices.” (PNU5S)

In short, respondents agreed that what is required is “qualified and capable staff to train students in professional way” (PNU5S).

One respondent studying at KSU was particularly eloquent on the issue of what constituted good and bad teaching in the context of translation:

> Translation is a skill that should be taught by an experienced person who is familiar with being a trainer or translator. Tutors must be able to train students, to make translation practice a regular task, and to be aware that their translation is not a model to follow […] Not the old fashioned method of giving students a text to translate and then commenting on it, then giving them a correct model translation! (KSU4S)

In relation to the last point, another student commented on the lack of flexibility shown by tutors when correcting texts (OTH1S).

A smaller number of students expressed concerns about what they perceived as a lack of coherence in approaches towards teaching translation in courses. One respondent noted that "methods differ from one tutor to the other which may cause confusion!" (QU1S). Another thought that "specifying one teacher for the module would help standardise the methods of teaching" (KAU48S).

It is worth noting that for a significant number of KAU students (*n*=23), the textbook currently used on the course is a viewed as a particular problem. Comments describe it as difficult to understand (*n*=5), with examples and explanations that are unclear (*n*=3). Other respondents thought it was inappropriate for beginners (*n*=4), contained multiple grammatical errors (*n*=2), or was out of date (*n*=2).

40

6.9.2 Examining the content of translation components

The questionnaire responses offer evidence throughout that student opinion is also divided on whether breadth or depth is preferred regarding the text types covered during the translation component of the degree course (see Section

[40] The textbook referred to is James Dickins, Sándor Hervey and Ian Higgins (2002) *Thinking Arabic translation: A course in translation method: Arabic to English.* Abingdon: Routledge. The key problem with using this book is that it is intended for students whose L1 is English.

6.6). In these responses, 16 students specifically mentioned that they wanted to be exposed to a wide range of text types. KAR1S argued for breadth on the grounds that "the translator has to learn more about the fields he/she may choose to specialise in". Another group of students stated they would prefer to study a smaller selection of areas and gain more in-depth knowledge of a particular specialism (*n*=11). The fields that were mentioned included science, law, medicine, pharmacology, and aviation.

The respondents acknowledged that not all students are interested only in translation, or even in being able to perform at the levels required to gain employment in the professional translation job market. However, some of the individuals who wanted to pursue careers in this area indicated that they often felt frustrated by what they judged to be the low-level content of the translation components of the course, arguing that too much contact time was spent on improving linguistic skills rather than developing translation abilities (11). This opinion was obviously in direct opposition to the opinion of those students who felt they needed more time spent on improving their skills in English. The majority of respondents often stated that the difficulty of accommodating different linguistic abilities could be addressed by simply adding more levels of translation modules or other module content. However, this strategy on its own would soon lead to a bulging curriculum and an unwieldy course. In comparison, some students proposed more radical solutions as a means to tackle this problem.

Most of these solutions involved re-structuring the course. The course could start with linguistic skills, covering grammar basics and vocabulary, and then offer modules in translation skills at different levels, with the modules graduating in difficulty from beginner to advanced, i.e. specialised (*n*=8). According to KAU72S, one way to facilitate this re-structuring would be to "keep the introduction to translation as a general module and then add translation as a pathway for those who are interested in it with more specialised modules". UQU1S argued that these modules could take the form of "elective modules for students".

This approach might also help to address other challenges that were raised by respondents: finding a balance in the course between L1/L2 and L2/L1 translation and determining whether the course should also focus on improving students' written competence in MSA and on broadening students' knowledge of vocabulary and/or specialised terminology in this area (*n*=12).

6.9.3 Making translation components more vocationally oriented

A recurrent theme across responses to all three of the open-ended items (Q13, Q18, and Q22) was the need to make the content of translation modules on degree courses more vocationally oriented so that students could acquire skills that matched the requirements of the current job market. One student went so far as to state that the "curriculum should be re-designed according to job

market needs" (KKU1S), a sentiment closely echoed by respondents from various other institutions:

> "We need to learn the basics about how to translate professionally, rather than just studying and memorising the information and then forgetting it." (KAU66S)

> "The job market needs translators of medical reports and legal contracts—not what we are taught." (TAU1S)

> "Although I have been a practising translator […] for more than two years, this module hasn't helped me to improve my skills at all. And my translation experience hasn't helped me to complete the [translation] module easily because actual translation and what is taught in this module are totally different." (KAU9S)

However, it should be noted that some students expressed doubts about the usefulness of preparing students for careers as translators and were pessimistic about a number of aspects of this profession in the Saudi job market. Some claimed there was a lack of jobs/very limited job availability (KSU7S, KAR2S) for translators. These two respondents could have been thinking about employment within the public sector, where stiff competition exists for posts of this kind and success is still often dependent on personal relationships (*wasta*[41]) rather than individual ability. However, the trend within the private sector is to close in-

[41] See Cunningham and Sarayrah (1994) and Aldossari and Robertson (2015).

house translation services and contract this work out to freelancers and thereby lower staff costs. Another student feared that the growing reliance on electronic translation devices, which are generally considered "quite good, accessible and easy to use", might decrease the need for translators (KKU1S).

Other students referred to the lack of recognition of the importance of translation as a profession, both in terms of social prestige and salary:

> "It takes a long time to be an expert, but translators can get replaced by anyone who speaks English! They're undervalued." (AIU10S)

> "It's sad that, unlike some other fields that require years of study, translation is not really appreciated, and it's undervalued in the job market." (PNU6S)

Another student, TAU2S, identified "low income" as one of the major disadvantages of taking up a career as a translator in Saudi Arabia.

Despite these reservations, significant numbers of respondents thought there should be a focus on practice rather than theory in the translation elements of the course, that the curriculum should include translation types and methods required for the job market, and that more components/modules should be added to improve students' professional skills. Some suggestions indicated that

the easiest and most effective way to achieve this shift in focus would be to offer extracurricular activities such as training (*n*=13) and workshops (*n*=5). It was stressed that these translation workshops should be offered by professional translators or individuals with specific expertise in this area. One respondent saw a role here for course graduates, who could deliver sessions on areas not included in lectures or classes or be invited to participate in these workshops to pass on their knowledge and experience and prepare current students for the job market (KAR6S). This idea may also help to deal with another problem, namely that graduates who work as freelancers have little effective support and may feel marginalised within the job market (*n*=2).

The suggestions made here by the students were similar to the recommendations made by González Davies (2005) regarding the need to embrace a more student-centred approach to teaching translation. Specifically, González Davies advocated for a curriculum that includes interactive workshops and material and tasks that students would be likely to encounter as professional translators. González Davies also highlighted the usefulness of drawing on the expertise of translation practitioners.

6.9.4 Other noteworthy observations by student respondents

In addition to the points highlighted in the sections above, the following potentially interesting observations were made by respondents:

- A need was noted to update the method and materials used in the translation components of the degree course by adding translation technology (KAU68S), incorporating "helpful electronic apps or programs" (KAU76S), and moving "away from pen and paper" (KSU8S).
- Although it falls outside the remit of this research, attention was repeatedly drawn to the current poor quality of interpreting education and training in language courses in Saudi universities.
- Two respondents drew attention to the fact that although students are major stakeholders in the university community, they currently have no real opportunity to offer input on aspects of curriculum planning or course content or any representative voice allowing them to register their opinions concerning the quality of the education that they receive (KAU4, PNU6S). This lack of voice is concerning, given that the NCAAA *Handbook for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Saudi Arabia* specifies as follows: "Stakeholders[42] should have substantial involvement in planning and review processes with feedback regularly obtained, analysed, and responded to" (NCAAA, 2015: 6).
- Finally, one student emphasised that relying solely on the information given in the classroom was insufficient; it was also important to learn independently (PNU3S).

[42] According to the NCAAA (2015: 6), "Stakeholders include students and graduates, staff, employers, providers of funds, members of the communities served by the institution and any other groups with which the institution is involved".

All these findings and observations obtained from the student questionnaire are based on the perspective of the Saudi students who are the current students of EFL course undertaking translation modules across the Saudi universities. However, the representations of the data collected from the staff questionnaire are further ensured through the collection of the data using similar kind of questions but for a different group involving the graduates of the EFL/ TS courses of Saudi universities in Chapter 7.

6.10 Summary

This chapter has presented the results of the questionnaire distributed to a sample of Saudi university students and highlighted some key concerns that merit further discussion. Respondents' replies have been analysed, and the statistical data gathered from this sample have been represented here in a variety of forms: tabular, pie charts, and bar charts. In addition to this quantitative analysis, responses from the open-ended questionnaire items have been analysed and categorised thematically. From the data analysis using discrete statistics, it is evident that there exist similarities between KAU and non-KAU students in the majority of the situations like having positive expectations during the start of the course, expectations of learning text and practicing from the course and the desire for adding extra content to the courses. However, the comparative analysis also showed differences that KAU students were not confident on this course helping them to become future translators. However, 22% of the non-KAU felt confident of their current course preparing them to be skilled translators.

The broader implications of the findings from the student questionnaire are obtained through improving the representativeness of the data obtained from the graduates of EFL/ TS courses across selected Saudi universities given in the following chapter. Further broader implications involve in ensuring the comparison of this data with the staff questionnaire and the employers' interviews in Chapter 8.

7 Analysis of Graduate Questionnaire and Employer Interview

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the questionnaire that was used to survey the opinions of a sample of graduates who had already studied EFL (including translation modules) or who had specialised in a translation programme at Saudi universities. This graduate questionnaire aimed to increase the representativeness of the research, which had previously conducted another questionnaire only with current EFL/TS students of Saudi Arabia (see Appendix 9). A total of 42 completed questionnaires were received, consisting of 12 questions, representing 8 Saudi institutions of higher education in total. As shown in Table 7.1, most respondents (52.4%, *n*=22) had attended KAU; therefore, KAU students were the focus of this research.

The main objectives of the graduate questionnaire were as follows:

- To evaluate the graduates' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the translation course(s) they had undergone at the university they attended.

- To gauge graduates' attitudes towards how translation had been taught in the past and towards the possibility of introducing changes in how translation would be taught for current students.

- To gauge graduates' attitudes towards the usefulness of translation courses when applying for jobs in the Saudi translation industry.

Taking these objectives into account, the graduate questionnaire is similar to the current student questionnaire in terms of the 'translation module assessment' (see Appendix 9). There are some similar questions that were asked regarding the students' expectations about the module, elements they believe that should be added: their assessment of some elements of the translation modules; their idea about including the practical training module; opinions on improving the course.

To identify the graduates' attitudes, however, some questions from the previous students' questionnaire were deleted as it consisted of 21 items, and new ones were added instead, concerning the usefulness of the previously experienced TS courses in competing as translators in the Saudi translation industry. Graduates were asked about their chosen course and career aspiration, their current jobs and the elements of translation/ interpretation included and their opinions on the skills required to work as professional translators. Therefore, the same Equation 8 (see Chapter 6) is used to calculate both the percentage of the graduates and employers and the average value. This formula is used to calculate the percentages mentioned in each chart in this section.

The overall statistical profile of the sample of graduate respondents can be seen in Figure 7.1. All the universities that are represented in this survey are publicly funded by the Saudi government. Geographically, the graduates in the sample had predominantly attended universities situated in the large cities of the Central and Western Provinces; only two students had attended universities in the more rural Southern Province (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Universities represented in the questionnaire sample of graduates

ID	University	No.	Percentage	Funding	Location
JU	Jeddah University	3	7.1	Public	Jeddah, Western Province
KAU	King Abdulaziz	22	52.4		Jeddah, Western Province
KKU	King Khalid University	2	4.8	Public	Abha, Southern Province
KSU	King Saud University	4	9.5	Public	Riyadh, Central Province
PNU	Princess Nora University	3	7.1	Public	Riyadh, Central Province
QU	Qassim University	1	2.4	Public	Qassim, Central Province
TAU	Taiba University	3	7.1		Medina, Western Province
TU	Taif University	3	7.1	Public	
Other		1	2.4	Unknown	Unknown
TOTAL OF RESPONDENTS		**42**			

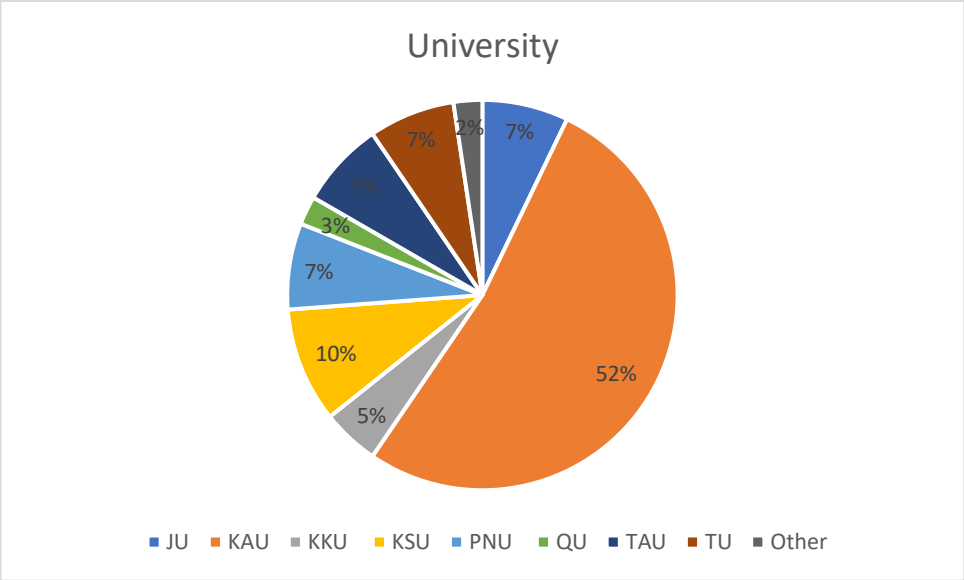


Figure 7.1: Statistical profile of graduates by university

7.2 Course of Study

Analysis indicated the graduates had undertaken four courses of study (Figure 7.2). Most graduates (76.2%, *n*=32) had pursued a general course (literature,

linguistics, or translation). Some graduates (19%, *n*=8) had specialised in translation, and one had studied literature and linguistics (2%). Most respondents noted the course they had studied involved literature, linguistics, and translation.

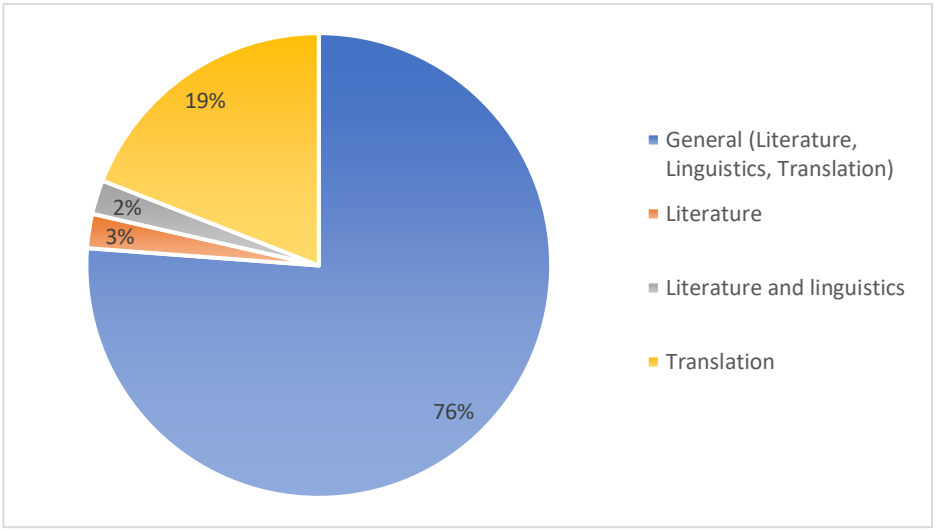


Figure 7.2: What course of study (lane) did you undertake?

7.3 Career Aspirations and Employment

In terms of career aspirations, most graduates (81%, *n*=34) had considered their course of study to be related to their career aspirations. Only two (4.8%) said they had studied literature because they like it (Figure 7.3).

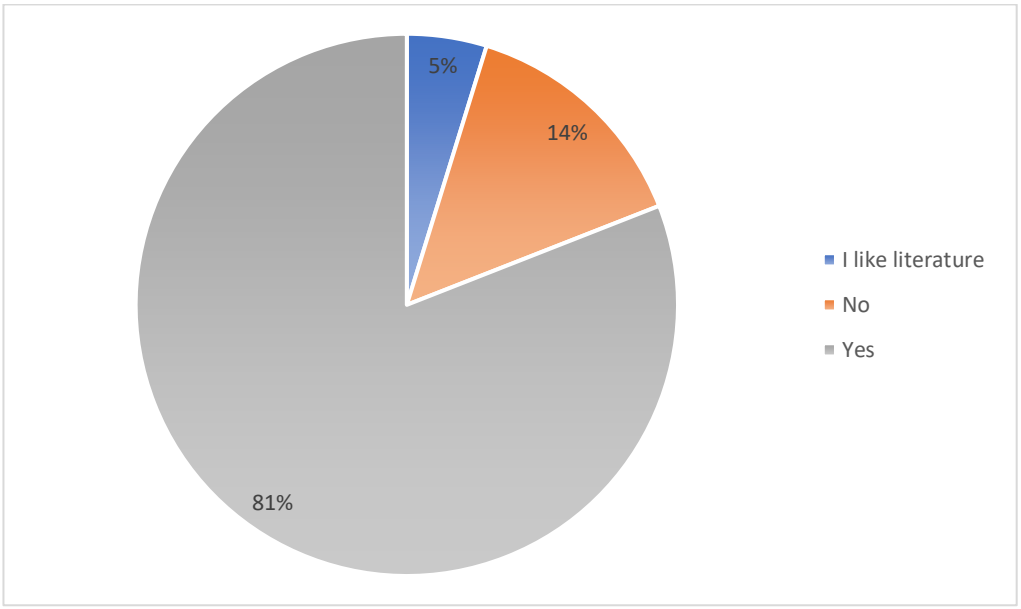


Figure 7.3: Was your choice in course of study related to your career aspirations? If not, why did you choose it?

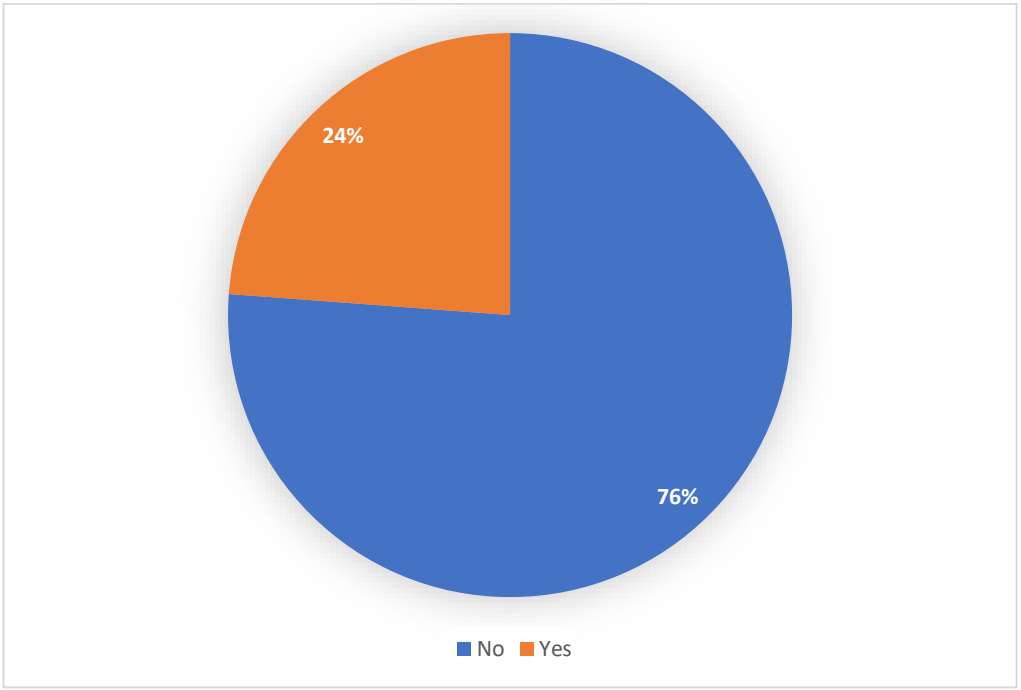


Figure 7.4: Are you employed?

As shown in Figure 7.4, the proportion of unemployment among the graduates is very high; more than two-thirds are jobless. The unemployed graduates indicated that they fear long-term unemployment, which would have a significant effect on their lives.

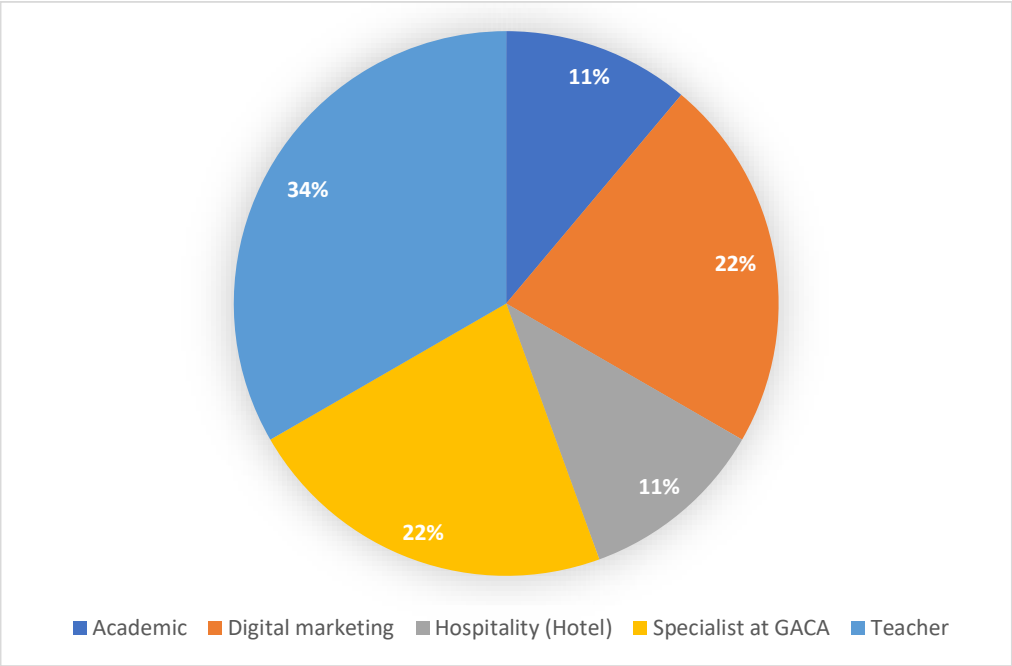


Figure 7.5: What is your field of work?

Those who had found employment were mostly working as teachers (34%, *n*=3), specialists at the General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) (22%, *n*= 2), or digital marketers (22%, *n*=2) (Figure 7.5).

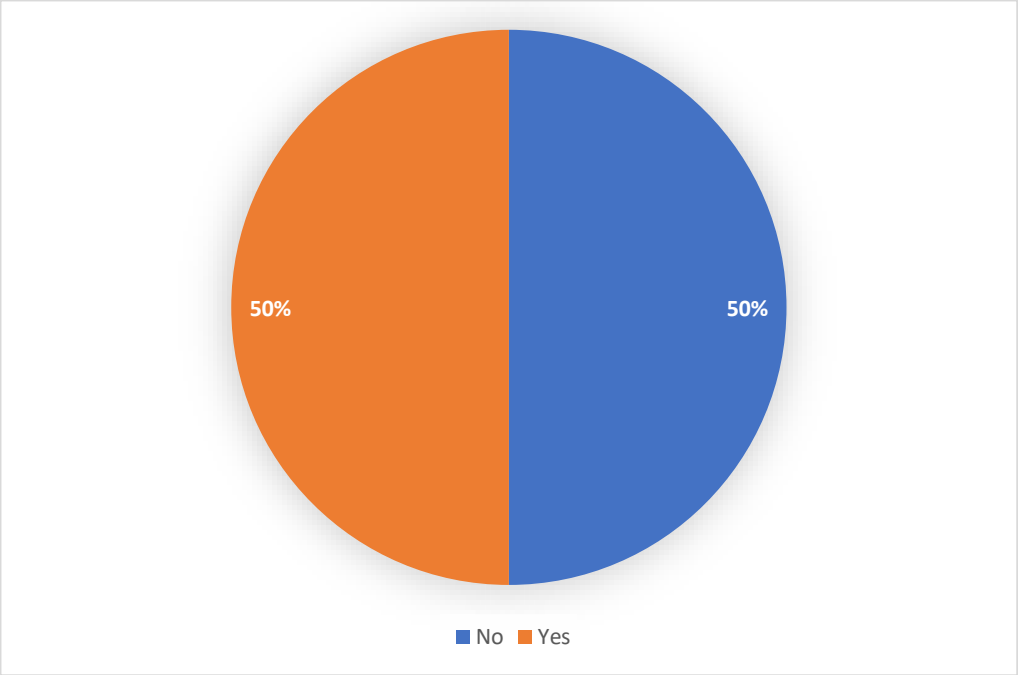


Figure 7.6: Does your job involve elements of translation and interpreting?

However, only 50% of the employed graduates (*n*=5) reported using translation in their jobs (see Figure 7.6); of those, three reported using translation occasionally, and only two said they use it regularly. Translation periods could last from 10 minutes to 7 hours. Translation was considered part of the job by only three employed graduates (33%) (Figure 7.7).

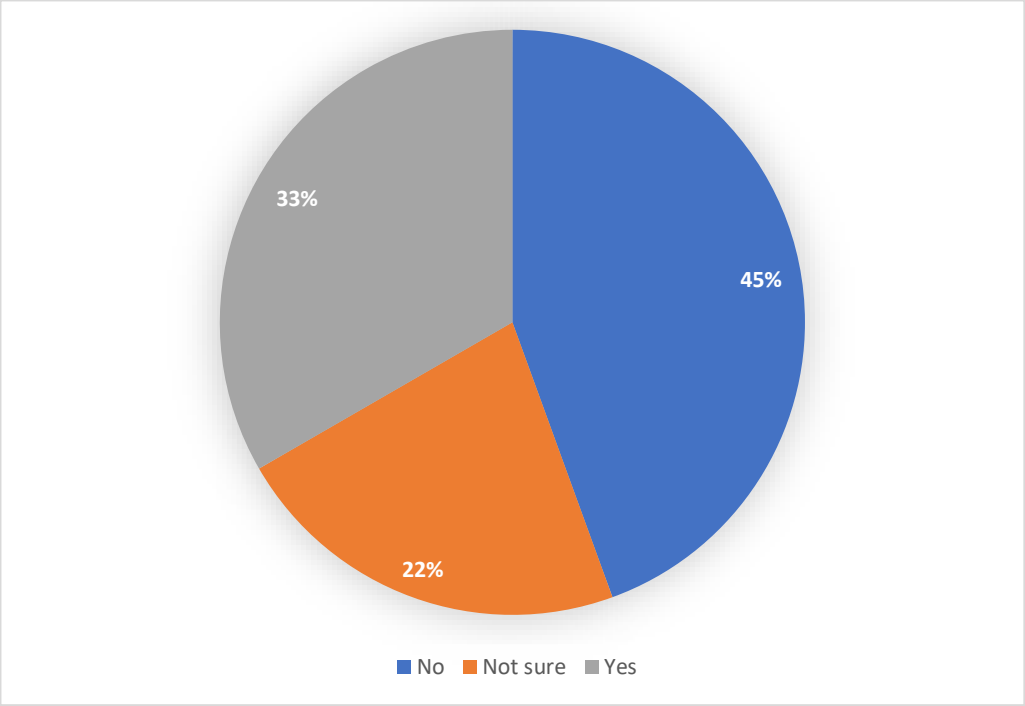


Figure 7.7: Is translation part of your work contract?

Despite most of the graduates stating that their course of study had related to their career aspirations, a great proportion were either unemployed or working in a field not directly related to their course of study. Although students' responses to the item about career aspirations suggested that many of them are already thinking seriously about working as translators after completing their studies, it is impossible to learn about graduate destinations and employability rates from the Saudi universities as they do not record formal information about the graduates and their employability (see Section 6.6).

7.4 Evaluation of the Graduates' Courses of Study

As in the current student questionnaire (see Section 6.7), the graduate questionnaire asked graduates to express their opinions on eleven elements of

the course they had studied: library resources, teaching methods, assignments, feedback given, text types chosen and their relevance, module objectives, final output, professional preparation to start a job, translation theories taught, interpreting, and translation technology. In assessing the elements of their courses, graduates used a five-point scale ranging from Excellent to Very Poor. Given that graduates came from a diverse selection of institutions, a Not Applicable category was also available to address the possibility that some courses may not have contained all the elements being evaluated, such as interpreting skills, for example.

This section will briefly present some of the similarities and differences between the questionnaire for current undergraduate students and the graduates. The elements of library resources and teaching methods are selected as a more detailed example of comparison because they are keys for assessing the translation modules from the perspective of the current undergraduate students and the graduates.

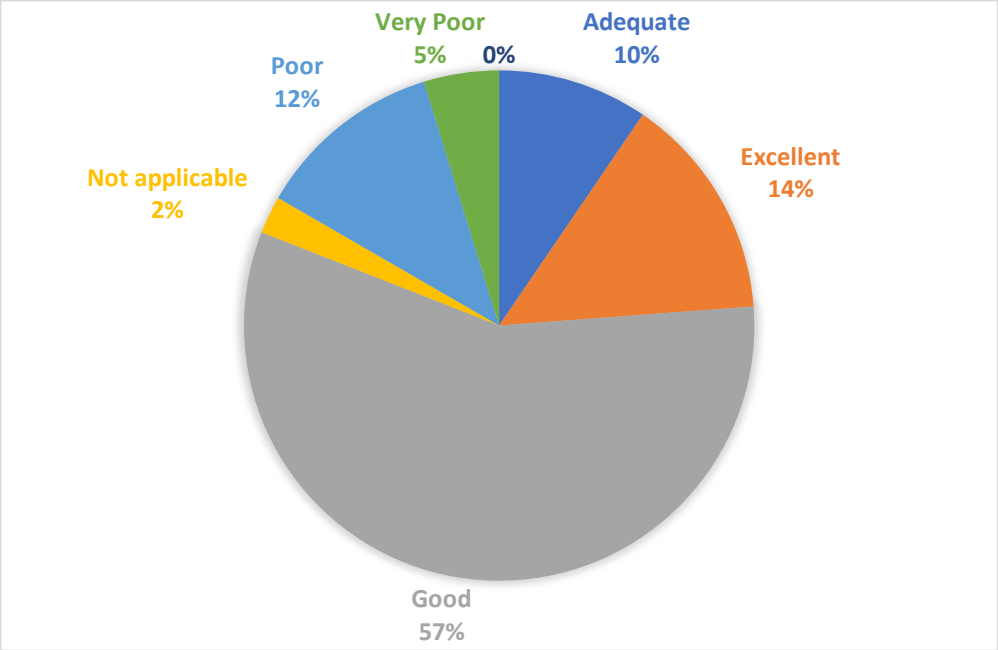


Figure 7.8: How would you rate library resources?

The first element analysed was library resources. As indicated by Figure 7.8, 57% (*n*=24) of graduates selected Good, and 14% (*n*=6) selected Excellent. On the negative side, library resources were rated negatively by students and graduates as Poor (13% of students and 12% of graduates) and as Very Poor (5% of graduates, 13% of students).

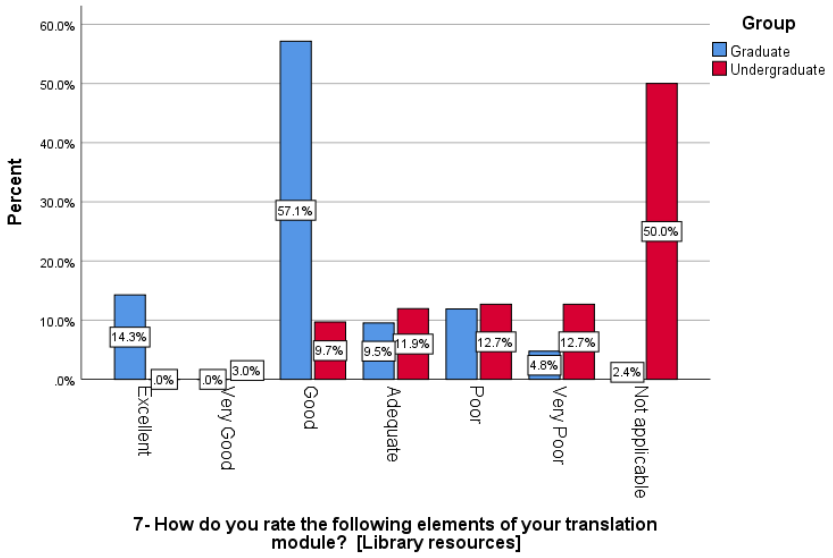


Figure 7.9: students/graduates rating of library resources

One respondent selected Not Applicable while half (50%, *n=67*) of the current students ranked this element as Not Applicable (see Figure 7.9). These statistics show that the majority of the graduates who were happy with library resources, unlike the current students who were either not aware or dissatisfied with them (see Section 6.7.1). The reason for this disagreement could be that graduates are in a position to appreciate the library resources as they have mastered the discipline to some extent while the current students are still very busy with studying and learning.

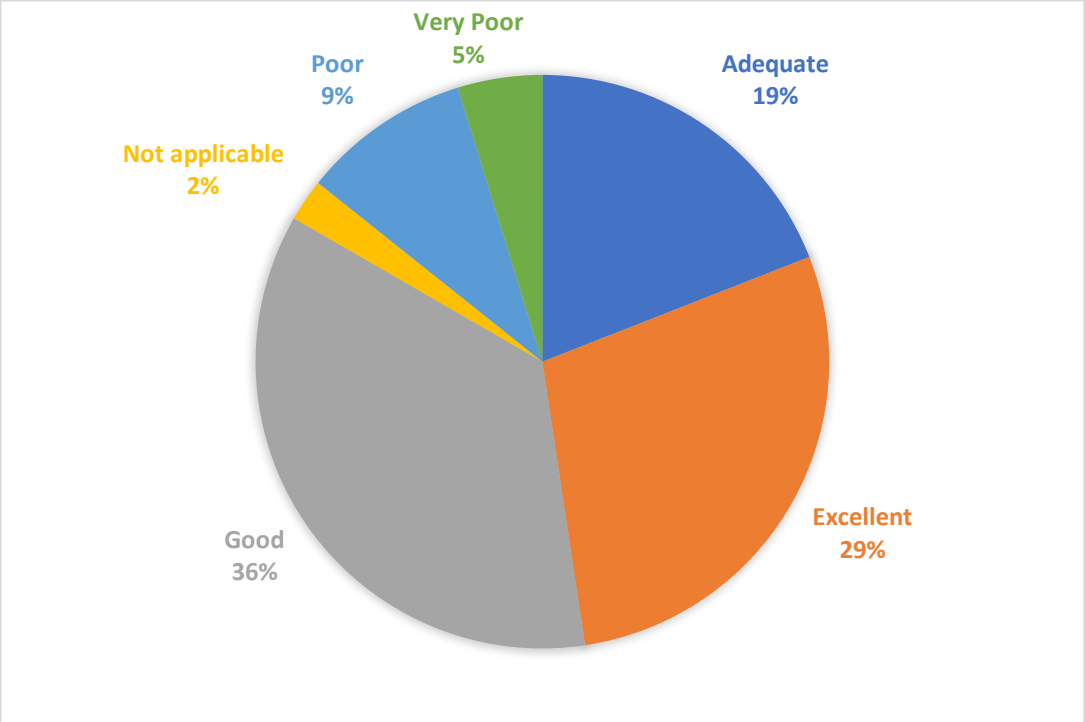


Figure 7.10: How would you rate teaching methods?

The second element to be analysed is the respondents' rating of the teaching methods used within the module. As Figure 7.10 indicates, above two-thirds of the graduates evaluated the teaching methods positively, (36%, *n*=12) rated them as Good (36%, *n*=15) or Excellent (29%, *n*=12). However, only 36% of current students rated it positively, either as Very Good (19%, *n*=25) or Good (18.7%, *n*=25) (see Figure 7.11). Teaching methods were rated Adequate by 20% of graduates (*n*=17), 26% of current students (*n*=35). On the other hand, less than 15% of the graduates' sample ranted it negatively as Poor (9%, *n*=4) and Very Poor (5%, *n*=2), while students rated it as Poor (12%, *n*=16) and Very Poor (13%, *n*=17).

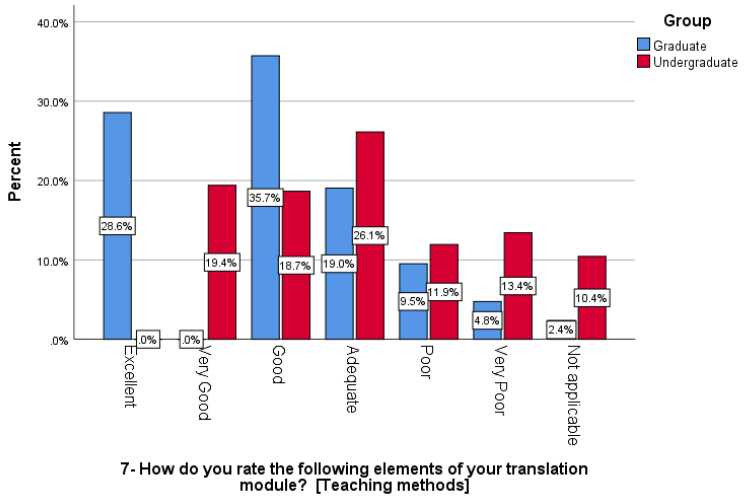


Figure 7.11: students/ graduates rating of the teaching methods

These data illustrate that a large percentage of the graduates were satisfied by the teaching methods in their universities which conforms to the data collected from the students who rated the teaching methods as just adequate (see Section 6.7.2).

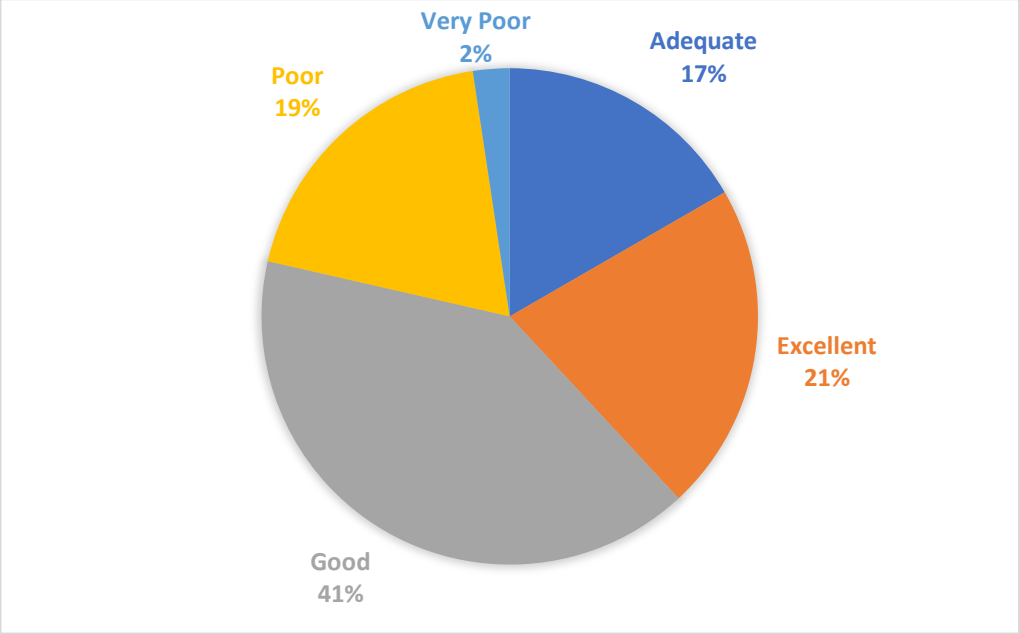


Figure 7.12: How would you rate the assignments given?

The assignments given during university comprised the third element analysed. As indicated in Figure 7.12, more than half of respondents (62%) ranked this element as either Good (41%, *n*=17) or Excellent (21%, *n*=9). Less than 25% ranked this element as either Poor (19%, *n*=8) or Very Poor (2%, *n*=1). 17% (*n*=7) ranked the assignments as Adequate. Like the students' responses regarding the assignments given (see Section 6.7.3), the graduates' opinions were considerably more positive than negative.

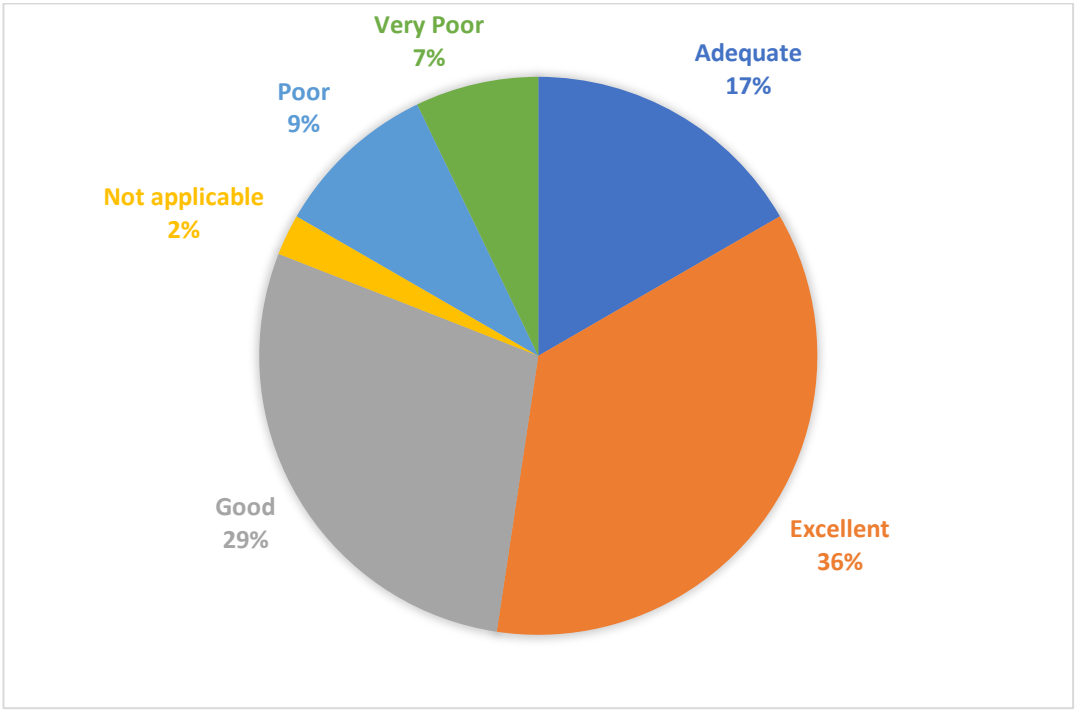


Figure 7.13: How would you rate feedback given?

The next element analysed was the feedback given at the end of the course which has been only asked to the graduates. As illustrated in Figure 7.13, the highest percentage of the graduates ranked the feedback given as Excellent

(36%, *n*=15), followed by Good (29%, *n*=12). Only 16% in total indicated that the feedback was either Poor (9%, *n*=4) or Very Poor (7%, *n*=3). Some graduates (17%, *n*=7) rated the feedback as adequate. The opinions on feedback were thus considerably more positive than negative.

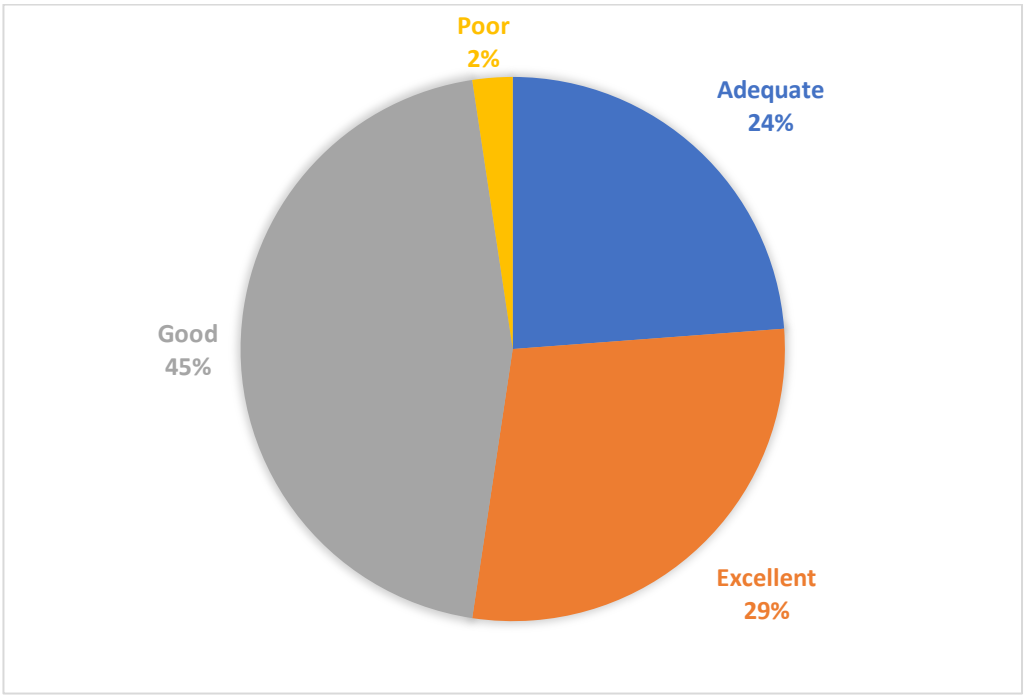


Figure 7.14: How would you rate the relevance of texts chosen for translation?

The fifth element analysed was the relevance of the texts chosen for translation in the course. Figure 7.14 shows that 74% of the graduates expressed a positive attitude towards this element, rating it as either Excellent (29%, *n*=12) or Good (45%, *n*=19). Only one graduate rated it as Poor (2%, *n*=1). 24% of the graduates (*n*=10) responded Adequate. Thus, like the current student responses and their different modules' expectations and career aspirations (see Section 6.7.5), most of the graduates felt the assigned texts used for translation were highly related to their needs.

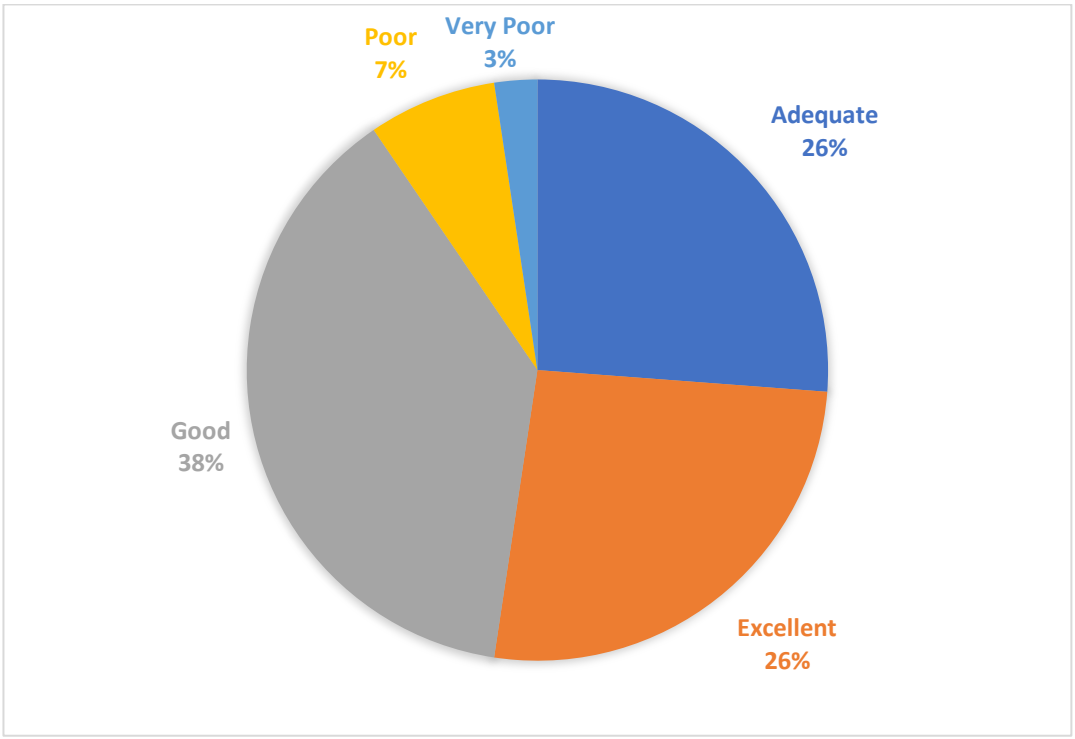


Figure 7.15: How would you rate the relevance of module objectives to content?

The module objectives' relevance to the content was the sixth element analysed, 26%, (*n*=11) of respondents categorised it as Adequate, 38% (*n*=16) as Good, and 26% (*n*=11) as Excellent. Only 10% expressed negative responses, whether as Poor (7%, *n*=3) or Very Poor (3%, *n*=1), to indicate they thought there was a mismatch to a greater or lesser extent between the objectives and module content (see Figure 7.15). Thus, similar to the students' responses (see Section 6.7.4), most graduates agreed that the relevance of module objectives to the content is high.

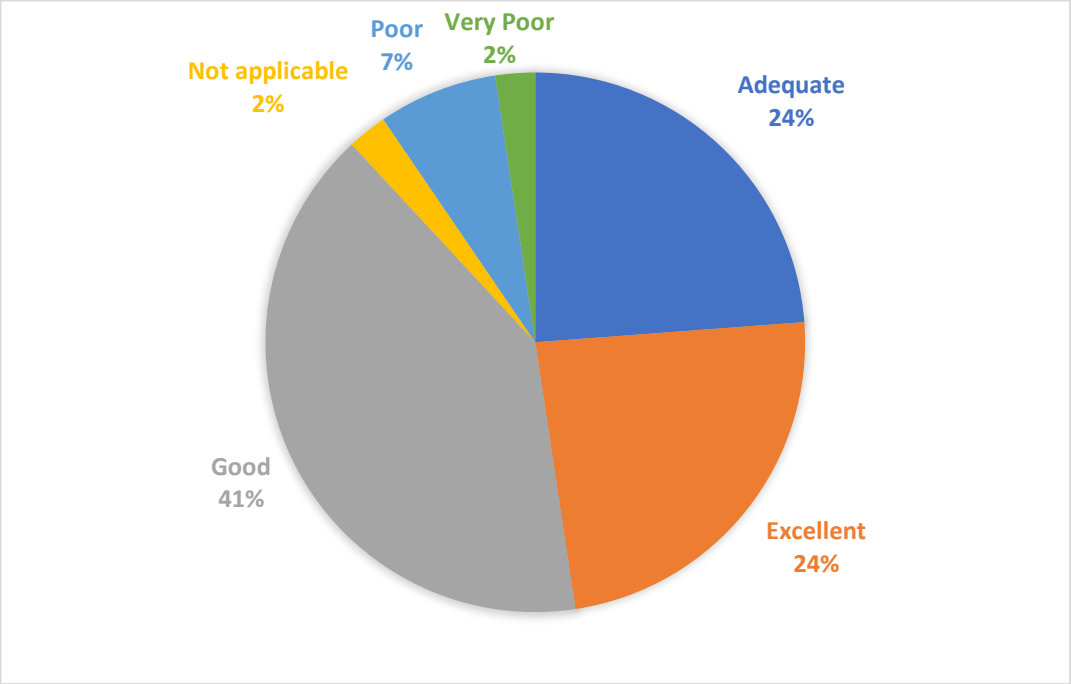


Figure 7.16: How would you rate the final outputs?

The seventh element analysed was the final output of the course, i.e. graduates' thoughts on whether their course enabled them to be competitive in the job market. As with the previous item, the percentage of graduates who expressed a positive opinion about this topic was high: 65% gave a positive opinion, rating it as either Excellent (24%, *n*=10) or Good (41%, *n*=17). Only 8% gave a negative opinion, rating it as either Poor (7%, *n*=3) or Very Poor (2%, *n*=1) (see Figure 7.16). About 24% of graduates categorised the final output as Adequate. Unlike current students who expressed fairly- balanced negative and positive responses (see Section 6.7.6), most graduates seem to have a clearer idea about their competence and agreed that their course had provided them with efficient translation skills.

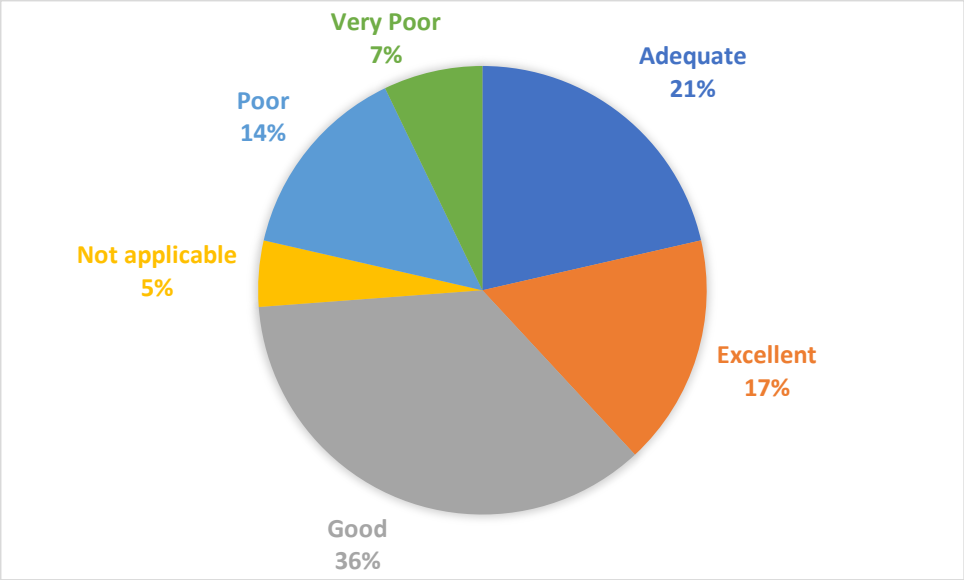


Figure 7.17: Professional preparation to start a job

The eighth element analysed was intended to measure the graduates' views on the professional preparation of the course they have attended. According to Figure 7.17), a total of 53% of the graduates expressed a positive opinion towards this element, rating it as either Good (36%, *n*=16) or Excellent (17%, *n*=7). A total of 26% expressed negative opinions rating it as either poor (20%, *n*=6) or very poor (6%, *n*=3). The remaining proportion (21%, *n*=9) ranked this element as Adequate. Thus, more than half of the respondents felt their course had prepared them well for the job market.

On the other hand, current students from different Saudi universities were overwhelmingly pessimistic about the professional preparation to work as translators (see Section 6.7.8). The discrepant results from those two sets of data merit further investigation. Students find it hard to accurately judge their

competences as translators before starting their real-life jobs or having a practical training module within the programme. This also might be due to the lack of self- esteem amongst students, the low awareness of the job market and its needs and the required competences to work as a professional translator which led to their negative views. However, graduates are more aware of the job market and its requirements so they could evaluate it better than the undergraduate students.

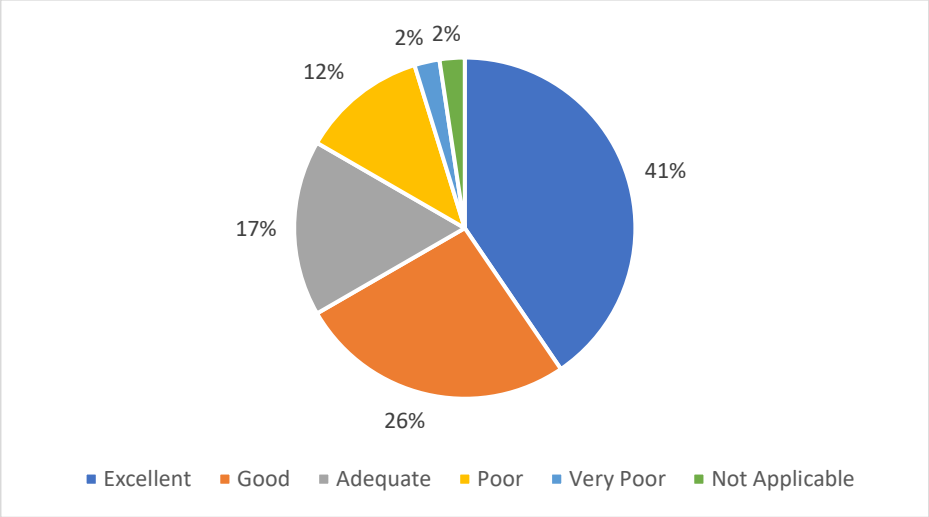


Figure 7.18: Translation theory taught

The reflection on the practical application of the translation theory taught in relation to the professional context was the ninth element analysed. As illustrated in Figure 7.18, nearly three-quarters of the respondents were pleased with the theory taught throughout their course, with (41%, *n*=17) rating it Excellent and (26%, *n*=12) as Good. 17% rated it as Adequate, and a total of 14% expressed a negative view rating it as poor (15%, *n*=5) or poor (2%, *n*=1).

Thus, the majority agreed that the translation theory taught had been helpful in practice. On the other hand, most of the current students from different universities felt that there is little connection between theory and practice (see Section 6.7.7).

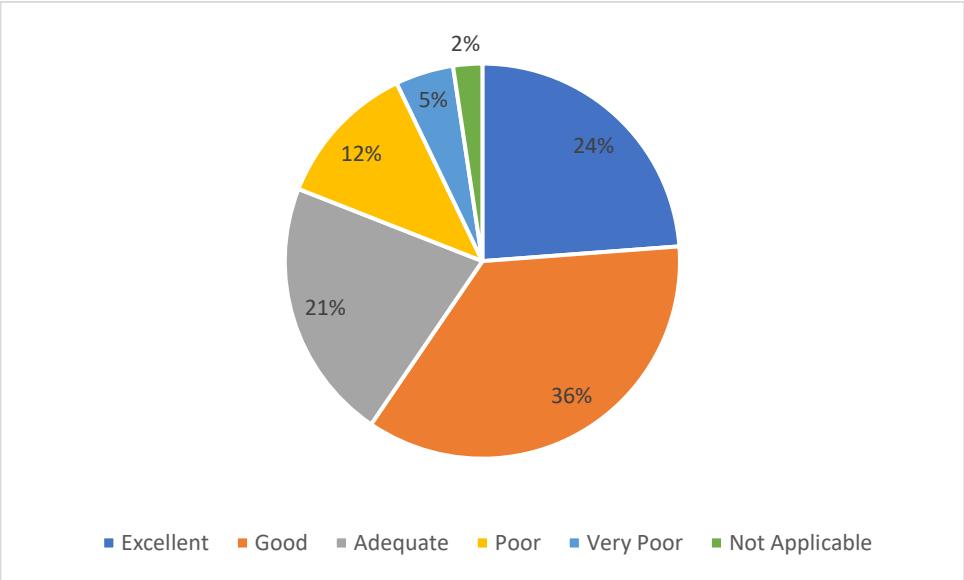


Figure 7.19: How do you rate interpreting?

The tenth element of this analysis is the acquisition of the interpreting skills taught in the course. This item has been addressed to the graduates only, as they might have a real- work interpreting experience and a better idea so they can evaluate the skills acquired easily. unlike students who attended different universities where most of the courses lack the interpretation element. 60% of the respondents expressed a positive opinion, rating it as either Excellent (24%, *n*=10) or Good (36%, *n*= 15). 21% ranked it as Adequate (*n*=10), and 19% expressed negative opinions as poor (15%, *n*=15) and very poor (4%, *n*=2) (see

Figure 7.19). Thus, nearly two-thirds of graduates agreed that their course had addressing interpreting skills sufficiently.

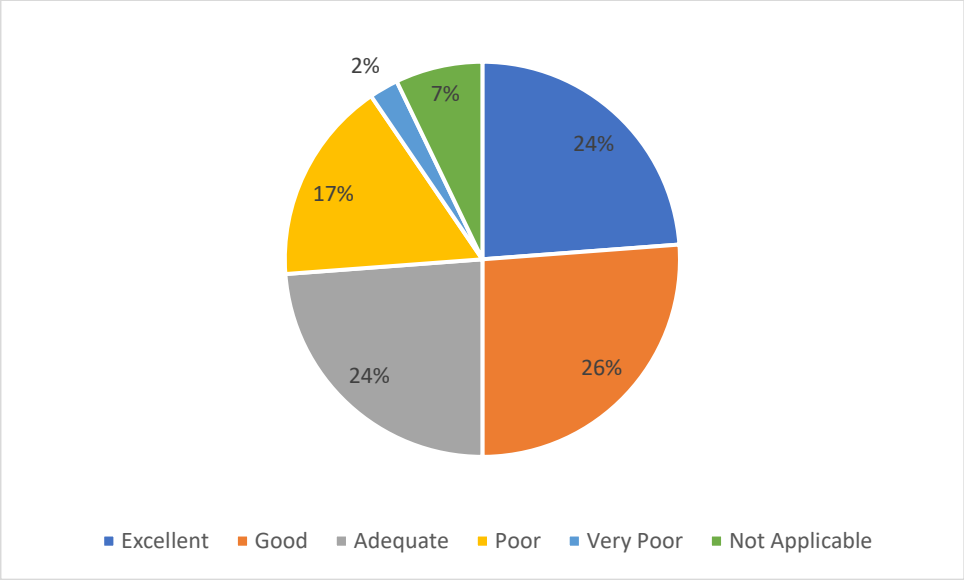


Figure 7.20: Translation technology

The final element analysed was the acquisition of the translation technology skills after the course. As indicated in Figure 7.20, half of the respondents rated this element positively as excellent (24%, *n*=10) and good (26%, *n*=12), while a quarter of the respondents rated it negatively as poor (17%, *n*=7), very poor (2%, *n*=1) and not applicable (7%, *n*= 3). The remaining quarter (24%, *n*=10) rated it as Adequate. Thus, most graduates were satisfied with the translation technology present in their course. However, current students showed a high rate of dissatisfaction (see Section 6.7.9). The opposing results from the students and the graduates and the expression of such diverse opinions suggest that graduates have more refined competences and awareness of their skills and needs.

7.5 Graduates' Suggestions for Modifying their Course

In this open- ended question, the graduates were asked to express their opinions on the elements they thought their course should have included. Unlike the case of the current students, graduates have a useful insight and perception after having experience in the job market. Therefore, more than one-third (33%, *n*=14) recommended adding more practical translation examples within the module (see Figure 7.21). About one third of the respondents (30%, *n*=13) were satisfied with the current module and said nothing needed to be added. Moreover, 9% of the respondents (*n*=4) recommended adding modules in different fields of translation (e.g. medical and legal translation), and the same percentage (9%, *n*=4) expressed a need for allocating more time for translation studies which indicates that they were not confident about their practical skills and would prefer more intensive modules.

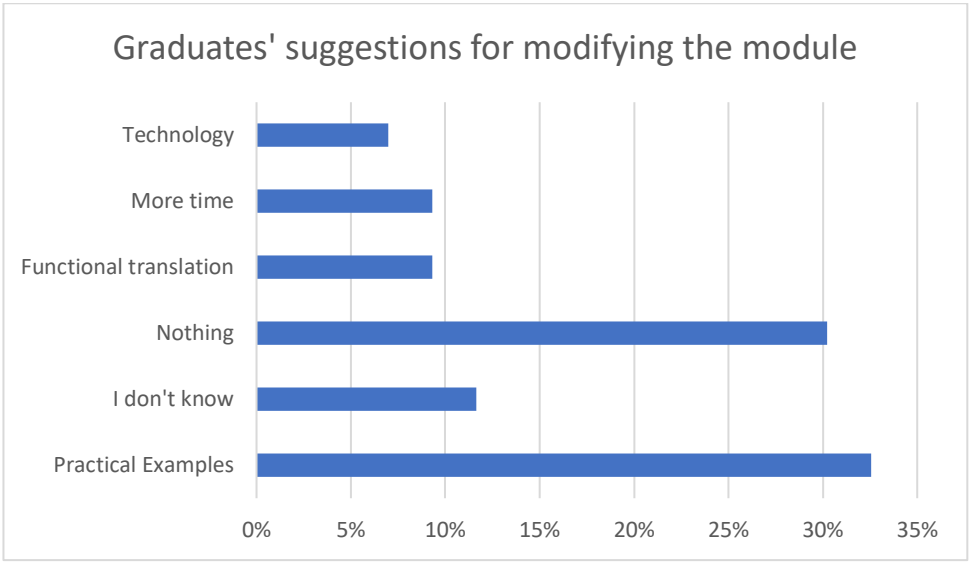


Figure 7.21: Graduates' suggestions for modifying their course

Most respondents were thus either satisfied with their course or felt the course would benefit from incorporating more practical elements. Adding more practical elements is an issue illustrated by staff, students, graduates and employers which demonstrated the urgent need to address this weakness amongst the different universities' programmes. On the other hand, as mentioned earlier (see Section 6.7.9), students' dissatisfaction with the IT skills acquired during the course rating was high (%55 for Non- KAU while %60 for KAU students). However, only 7% of the graduates (*n*=3) expressed the need for adding the technology element to the course, while (%12, *n*=5) were not quite sure of the elements that could be added to the course in order to improve the graduates' professional translation skills. Employers have also acknowledged the lack of IT skills is a common problem amongst the hired graduates.

7.6 The Skills Needed to Work as a Professional Translator

In this open- ended question, graduates were asked to reflect on the required skills they needed after they started working as professional translators (see Figure 7.22). The categorisation of skills' elements and the results are similar to the students' data analysis which was organised into four different elements (see Section 6.8). Regarding the language skills, 33% (*n*=14) of the graduates highlighted the importance of comprehending the grammars in both languages; 23% (*n*=9) noted fluency in both languages. 26% of them (*n*=10) noted employability attributes and personal characteristics such as passion, patience, and promptitude; 21% (*n*=8) indicated translation skills including constant practice to improve competencies; 5%, (*n*=2) highlighted technology skills. It

was surprising that only 2 graduates and 5 Non- KAU students of the total sample of surveyed respondents highlighted the need for IT skills. This illustrates that there is a lack of awareness of the IT skills and their importance to the professional translators. However, employers considered the lack of IT skills as the most common weakness among the gradates.

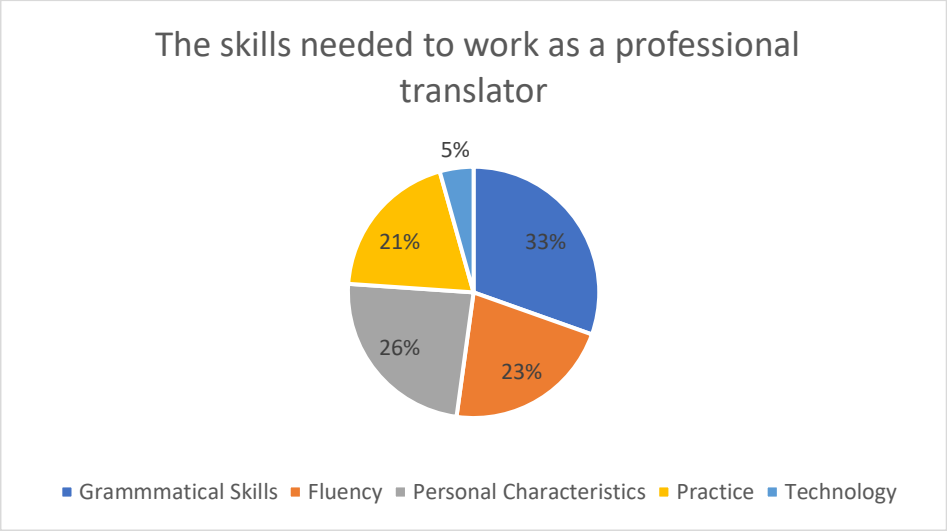


Figure 7.22: The skills needed to work as a professional translator

Most graduates agreed that the more the translator learns and practices, the more professional he/she will be.

7.7 Suggestions for Course Improvement

In this open-ended question, the respondents gave several suggestions on how the translation course could be improved (Figure 7.23). The main suggestion

(33%, *n*=14) was to include practical elements in the course as students mentioned earlier that there is a focus on theory over practice (Chapter 6). The second most common suggestion (28%, *n*=11) was to use more effective teaching methods and learning techniques. Similarly, current students mentioned that there is a need to move from the teacher- centred approaches (Section 6.9). Additional suggestions included improving textbooks (12%, *n*=8) and offering extra modules (7%, *n*=5). Students had previously demonstrated the need to update the modules and to be given a chance to suggest and reflect on the module input and curriculum planning (see Section 6.9.4). Only a small number of graduates (7%, *n*=5) said their course did need any modifications or improvements. These suggested issues illustrate a recurring key problem within the translation modules in Saudi universities as they have been highlighted in many occasions by staff (see Section 5.3), students (see Section 6.9.3), graduates and employers (see Section 7.10).

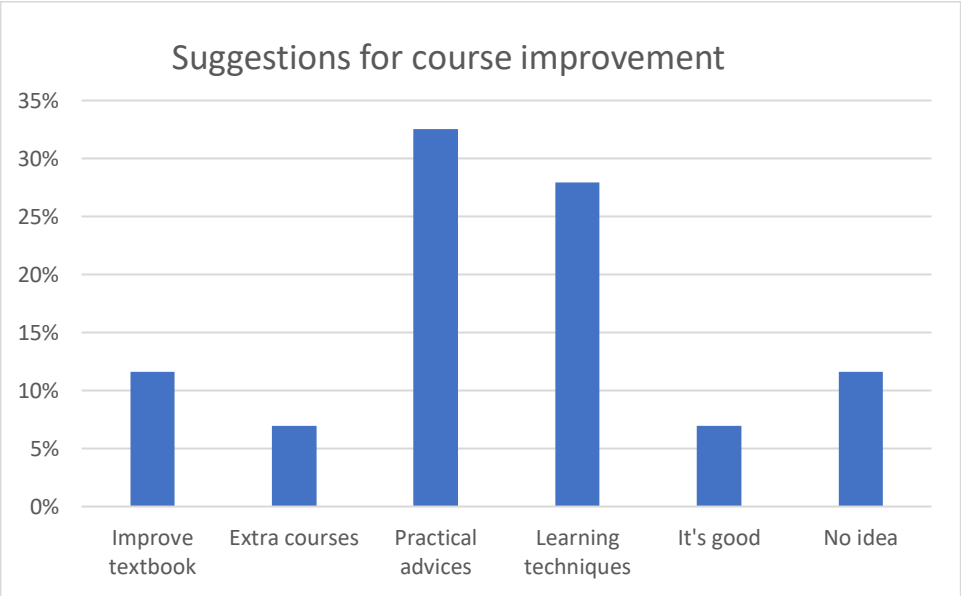


Figure 7.23: Suggestions for course improvement

Thus, more than two-thirds (28%, *n*=14) of respondents agreed that improving teaching methods and learning techniques and adding more practical elements (33%, *n*=16) would inform the development and enhance the outcome of their course.

7.8 The Internship (Practical Training)

Internship is a major issue which mentioned in the data analysis of the data of staff, students and graduates. As shown in the results of students' data, it is predictable that all graduates would agree that internships strongly support students in their future careers. Respondents justified their opinions as follows: more than half of the respondents (53%, *n*=23) indicated that internship enhance the professional experience of the translator, and less than a half (47%, *n*=20) believed that internship familiarise students with the translation field and thus prepare students well to start their careers (Figure 7.24).

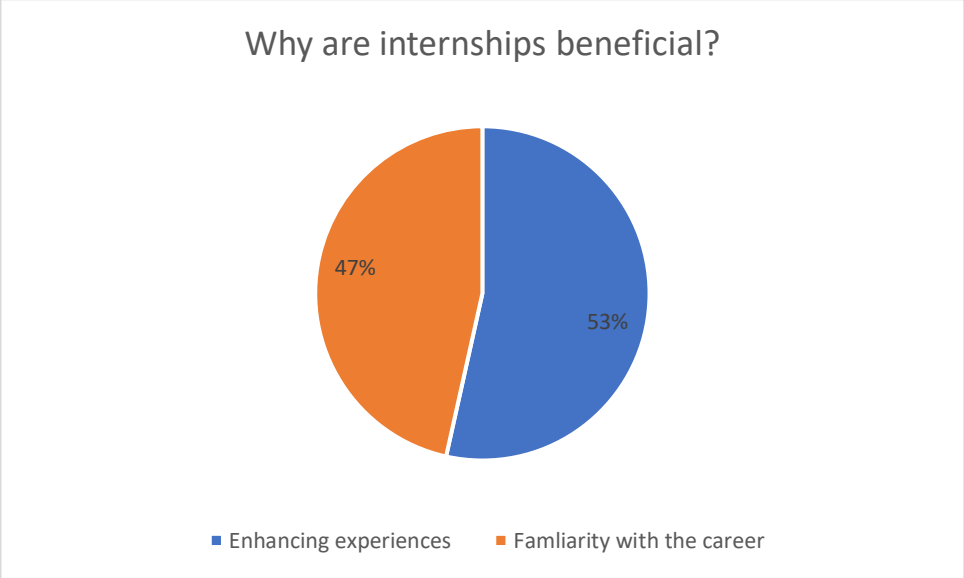


Figure 7.24: Why are internships beneficial?

Based on the previously analysed data, there was full consensus among the staff, students and graduates that practical training is helpful and beneficial in producing more competitive translators who are well prepared for the job market.

The following section presents and integrates the results of the employers' interviews to increase the representativeness of the data previously collected from other stakeholders.

7.9 Employers/Non-academic Translation Centres in Saudi Arabia

7.9.1 Introduction

This section presents the results of the interviews with a sample of employers which hire graduates of EFL/TS courses. Due to the changes in the market needs, these semi-structured interviews aimed at improving the representativeness of contextual market descriptors; rather than relying on data derived from other studies such as Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) (see Section 4.3.3). This research brought in primary data to validate previous study results and overcome its limitations (see Section 2.6). It will also investigate the market views, an important element in this research, from a different perspective.

The semi-structured interview questions used to collect data from the employers in Saudi Arabia are given in Appendix 10. Seven of the top employers from

different fields were chosen for the interviews in order to perceive a wider picture of translation job market needs. Although the number of respondents is minimal as this was affected by the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020 (see Section 3.8.1), they presented useful views that contribute to the study (see Section 9.6 on limitations). The fields represented are the oil and gas industry, petrochemical industry, consumer goods industry, aviation, media, health care, and banking (see Section 3.8.4).

Table 7.2: Employer profiles

Industry of the employer	Number of responses
Oil and Gas industry	1
Petrochemical industry	1
Consumer goods industry	1
Aviation	1
Media	1
Banking industry	1
Healthcare industry	1

The main objectives of the employers' interviews were as follows:

(1) To collect data from the employers of Saudi companies about their employees who have graduated from EFL/TS courses at Saudi universities, specifically those employees' skills in the translation job market and the appropriateness of those skills.

(2) To obtain the employers' views and expectations of these Saudi graduate employees, including the graduates' strengths and weaknesses, in order to form a clear picture of job needs and expectations.

Regarding the second objective in particular, this important information provided a fuller picture of real-world market descriptors and job requirements; these factors need to be addressed and implemented in the translation courses to ensure the alignment of educational programmes with the actual market needs.

Taking the above objectives into account, the semi-structured interviews were designed to acquire the following information:

(1) Employers' methods of advertising jobs and recruiting Saudi graduates.

(2) Employers' requirements, what they are looking for in Saudi graduates, and employers' reasons for hiring graduates.

(3) Employers' views on the efficiency of the graduates and suggestions for improvements (see Appendix 10).

7.9.2 Employers' Methods of Advertising Jobs and Recruitment.

When the employers were asked about the required languages at their companies, 67% reported that both Arabic and English are required (*n*=7), while 33% (*n*=3) indicated that only English is required (Figure 7.25).

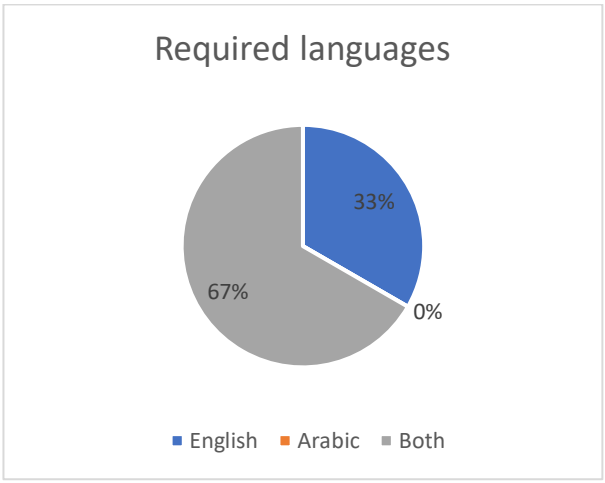


Figure 7.25: Required languages

In this item, employers were asked about the need for translation or interpreting services in their work. 50% of the respondents (*n*=3) reported they need these services on a regular basis, the others 50% (*n*=3) only hire translators occasionally or when they are needed which is considered to be more cost-effective for the employers (Figure 7.26).

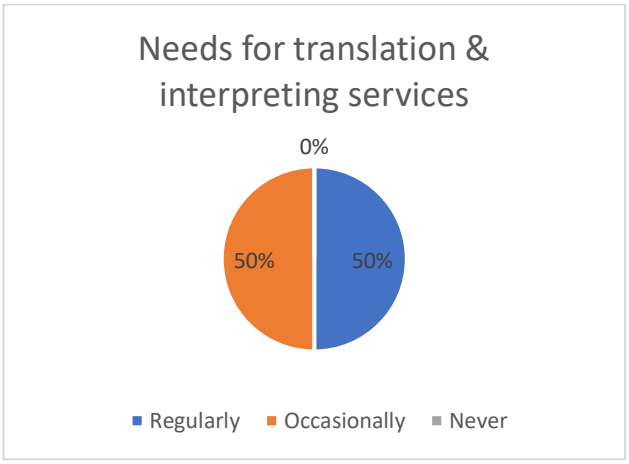


Figure 7.26: The need for translation & interpreting

With regards to job advertisement, most of the employers (approximately 70%, *n*=7) stated that their company website is their preferred channel for advertising their job opportunities. However, some employers also reported using social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. The job advertisements published by the employers on these social media platforms differ from those on traditional media due to the ability of digital advertisements to reach a wide target audience in a short period of time (Figure 2.27).

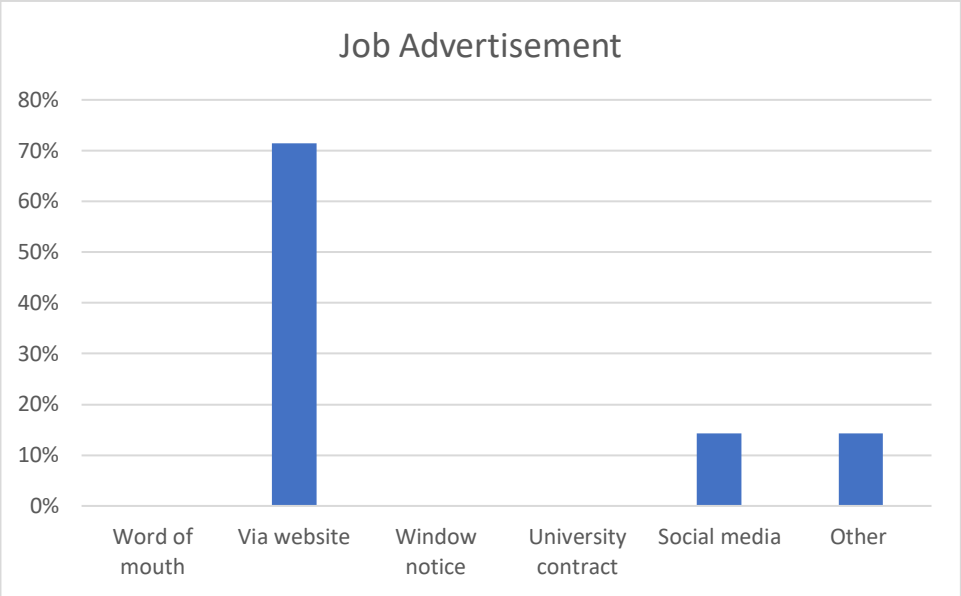


Figure 7.27: Job advertisement

7.9.3. Employers' Requirements of the Graduates and Reasons for Hiring Them

All the employers declared they employ graduates from Saudi universities. Employers reported hiring from 3 to 20 graduates per year. All the employers reported that the recruiting of graduates from Saudi universities is a continuous process that happens on a regular basis. Regarding their reasons for employing those graduates, 33% of the employers (*n*=3) wish to endorse national skills, 22% (*n*=2) show trust in the qualifications and competency of these graduates, 22% (*n*=2) prefer the simplicity of the recruitment procedures and the easy approachability. Among the five reasons reported for hiring Saudi graduates, however, none were reported by more than 50% of the employers; this result could indicate that the employers are considering a combination of different reasons to recruit the Saudi graduates. Other underlying causes mentioned were cost efficiency and a desire to enhance the diversity in the work environment (Figure 7.28).

Figure 7.28: Reasons of recruitment and Saudiism

Then, respondents were asked about the employment field for the graduates in the company. The employers highlighted corporate affairs (67%, *n*=5); followed by public relations (33%, *n*=2); corporate affairs include HR, CEOs, translation departments, etc., while public relations includes corresponding and communications services (Figure 7.29).

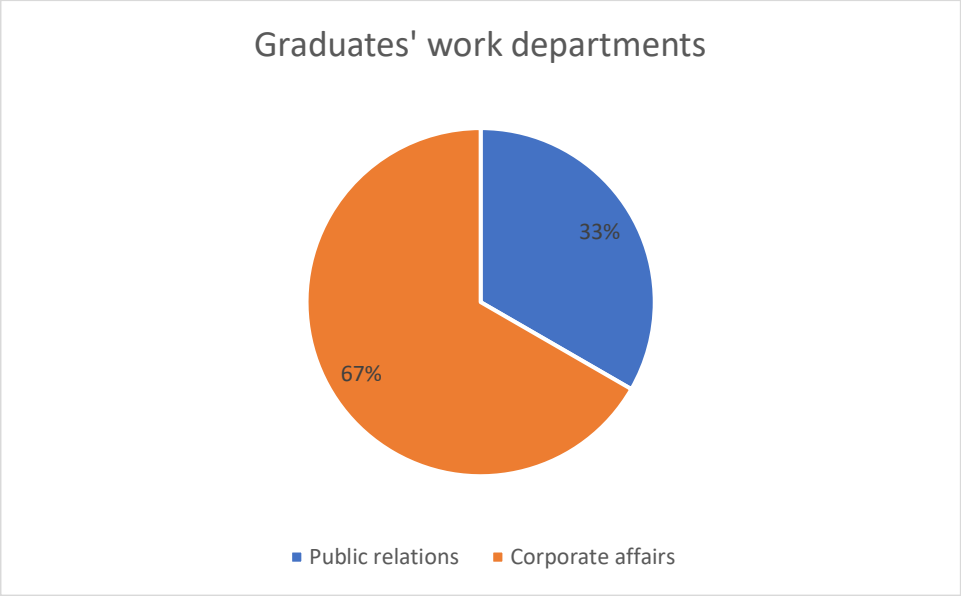


Figure 7.29: Graduates' work departments

In recruiting these graduates, the employers also aim to diversify their workforce background, attract talents in the labour market, and comply with governmental regulations related to supporting the local graduates. Moreover, the employers expect that these graduates will be dedicated and able to fulfil the translation needs of the Saudi translation industry. There was a consensus among the employers that the graduates are well qualified which confirms the opinion of the

staff who were mostly confident (60%- 73%) that graduates are ready to start a career in translation (see Section 5.3).

This open-ended question gave the respondents the chance to reflect on the graduates' employment and whether they are hired as a permanent part of the work force or only on occasional basis. 83% of the employers reported hiring graduates on a permanent basis in order to incorporate them into their workforce and maintain sustainability and business continuity. This enhances the job security being a big concern for both students and graduates. However, 17% of the employers indicated that they hire graduates only on an occasional basis as the need arises as this is more convenient and cost efficient (Figure 7.30).

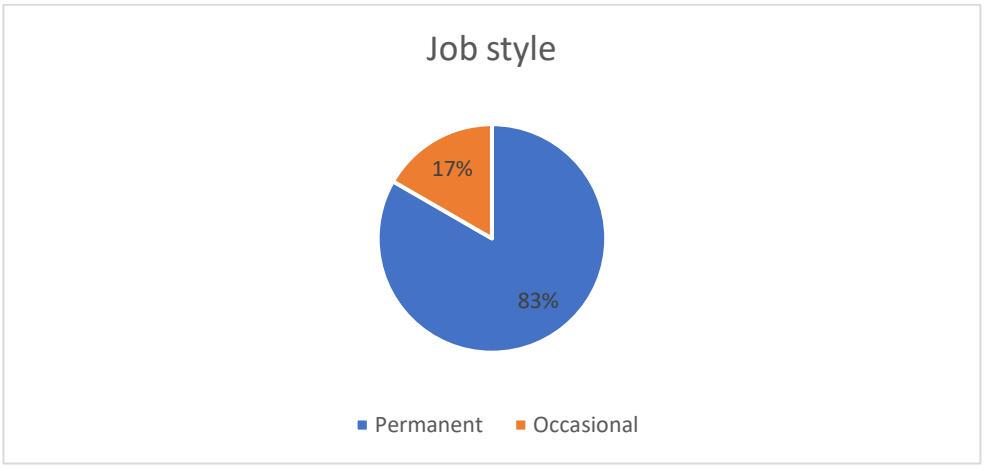


Figure 7.30: Job style

When employers were asked about the criteria used for selecting potential translators, they reported taking various criteria into consideration when

recruiting employees. The grade point average (GPA) of graduates and graduates' qualifications were priorities for 36% and 27% of the employers respectively. Other employers emphasised graduates' experience (18%) and interview performance (18%) (Figure 7.31).

Figure 7.31: Recruiting criteria

However, about 50% of the employers did not consider experience as a crucial recruitment criterion in determining whether graduates were qualified. In contrast, 50% of the employers did express interest in experience as a criterion for hiring as this might be a good indication for their skills and competitiveness as professional translators (Figure 7.32).

Figure 7.32: Qualification vs. experience

Regarding the required qualifications, 50% of the employers preferred to recruit graduates with both language and translation degrees, 33% felt that a language degree was enough, and 17% were concerned only with graduates' fluency in the foreign language (Figure 7.33).

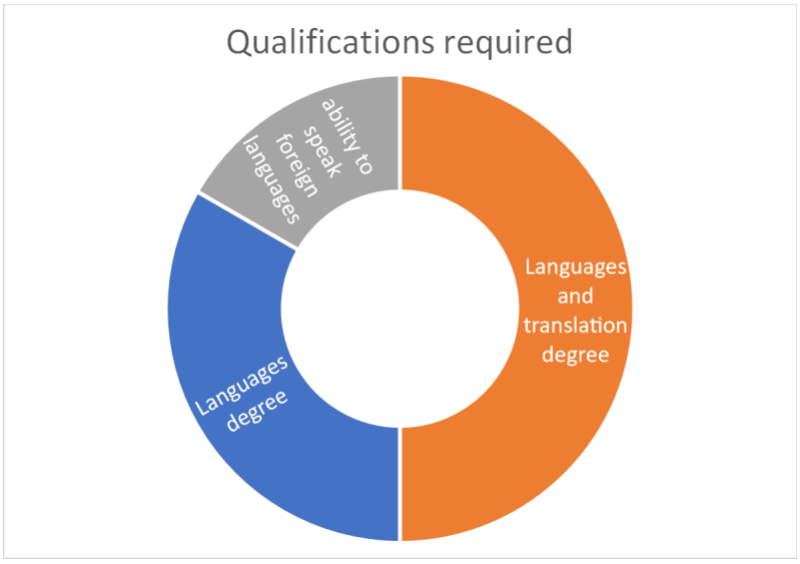


Figure 7.33: Qualifications required

Regarding the pay rate, more than 80% of the employers reported that it depends on the qualifications and experience. All the employers agreed that the more years of experience and the higher a graduate's GPA, the higher the salary is. Few employers felt interpreting skills were important in the recruitment process of graduates.

7.9.4 Employers' views on the efficiency of the graduates and suggestions for improvements

With regards to the graduate efficiency as shown in (Figure 7.34), Most employers rated graduate efficiency and translator performance as Good (83%); followed by Average (17%). Previous education and knowledge for their job was rated mainly as Average (67%); Good (33%). Cooperation and teamwork skills was rated mainly as Good (67%) followed by Average (33%). Productivity and ability to propose ideas was rated mainly as Average (67%) followed by Excellent (17%). Commitment to their jobs and time management was rated mainly as Good (50%), Average (33%) and then Excellent (17%). Ability to deal with new technologies and software was rated mainly as Poor (33%), Average (33%), Very Poor (17%) and Good (17%).

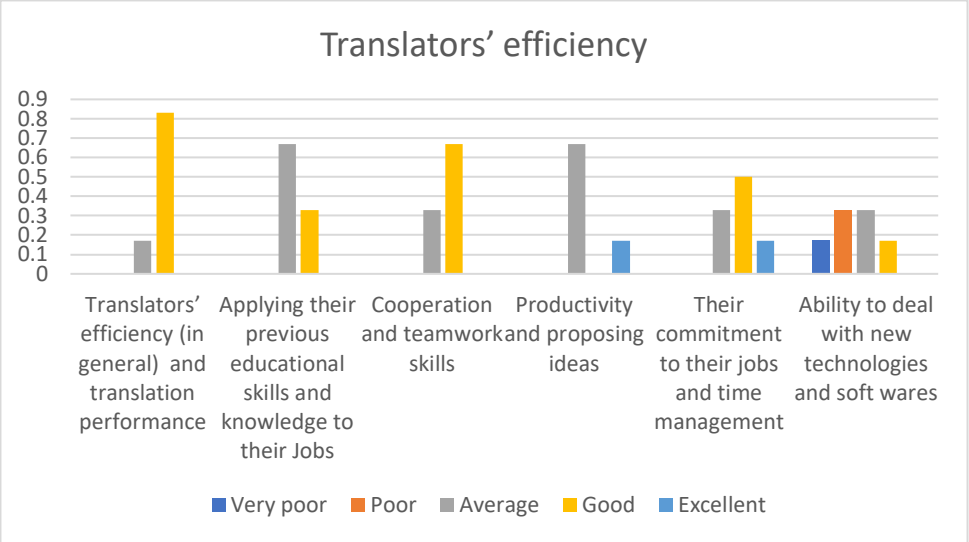


Figure 7.34: Translators' efficiency

It is interesting to view the student and graduate efficiency evaluation from a different point of view as it has been previously described by students that they were not happy with their acquired skills and felt that they are not trained well to start a job in translation (see Section 6.7.8). This highlights the importance of the practical training or work-shadowing as it provides them with concrete experience for evaluating their competences (see Section 9.4).

Moreover, the negative rating for the ability to deal with technology confirms the results obtained by the analysis of job requirements in Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) (see section 4.6). It illustrates that some competences are highly required in the market such as professional and instrumental competence (50%), but the reflecting percentage offered from the JU course is significantly lower (9.3%) which confirms the employers views regarding the poor technological skills of the graduates (see Section 8.6).

In this open-ended question, employers were asked to identify the weaknesses and strengths in the graduates they hire. They repeatedly considered the poor linguistic skills related to either English or Arabic and lacking the IT skills as the most common weakness among the graduates; other weaknesses included the lack of practical experience, understanding the job requirement and the poor teamwork skills. In comparison, they rated the general translation efficiency positively as the most common strength, followed by the graduates' commitment to their jobs, flexibility, and willingness to learn (Figure 7.35).

Figure 7.35: Weaknesses & strengths

The employers also indicated the employees' poor teamwork skills which falls under interpersonal competence that is required in the market (11%) according to the JD analysis obtained by Al-batineh and Bilali (2017) but which has not been given an importance in JU or in MENA courses. They also suggested

empowering the graduates by adding additional specialised modules and workshops to improve both translation and IT skills. These suggestions have been acknowledged previously by the stakeholders will be discussed in the following Chapter (see Section 8.6). After analysing the market views through employers, it was found that results and findings correspond to those obtained by Al-batineh and Bilali (2017), indicating that the EFL/TS courses do not yet align with the market needs. Therefore, the recommendations obtained from the previous study will not be affected by conducting interviews. However, they will be validated and conclusions can be drawn and generalised.

7.10 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the responses from the graduate questionnaire and the employers' interviews while integrating previously analysed data from staff and students. It has acknowledged some key concerns that have been commonly perceived. In the following chapter, all the previous results from the student, staff, graduate questionnaires as well as the employer interviews are discussed in relation to the relevant literature from this field and used to address the research questions of this study. Throughout, the aim is to identify a set of recommendations that can help to inform the development of a more vocationally oriented translation curriculum.

8 Discussion

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, aspects of the results from the staff, student, graduate questionnaires, and employer interviews are compared with each other and with the existing research in the field. Where possible, research that is specifically relevant to the national context of Saudi Arabia or to the MENA region has been used. The aim in this chapter is to synthesise these findings in order to address two of the research questions presented at the start of this thesis:

1. To what extent do the translation programmes at KAU and other Saudi universities teaching translation meet the current needs of the professional market in Saudi Arabia?
2. To what extent do these programmes provide their bachelor degree graduates with the vocational skills needed to enter the translating profession?

The findings in this chapter are also used to produce recommendations in the concluding chapter of this thesis that address the fourth research question:

4. What changes need to be made to existing teaching practices, curricula, and student skill sets in order to improve the course design and teaching of translation in Saudi universities, thereby producing graduates with the necessary vocationally oriented profile?

The approach adopted here is a thematic one. It picks up on some of the major issues that emerged from the questionnaires, interviews as well as on the issues

that have been highlighted in previous research. This chapter explores how these issues relate to each other, to the Saudi context, and to the Arabic-speaking world in general. The chapter also attempts to make connections between this research and broader concerns about translator training and the development of vocational competencies. The aim is to consider how to improve the alignment between course design and the teaching of translation for professional translators in order to address the needs of the rapidly developing market in Saudi Arabia.

The chapter begins by considering the extent to which the current profile of staff at Saudi universities is aligned with the elements of translation in the curriculum which is being delivered at these higher education (HE) institutions.

8.2 The Lack of Staff with Appropriate Qualifications, Expertise, and/or Professional Experience

Both staff and student questionnaires made clear that the university staff responsible for delivering the translation-related elements of the courses analysed are likely under qualified or lacking the relevant professional experience and specialist skills required to teach the modules they have been allocated and to prepare students for careers as professional translators. In part, this evidence came from examining the profile of the staff respondents in terms of their self-reported academic qualifications and specialisms, length of time in service, and personal assessment of their capacity to deliver what was required. Evidence also came from students' evaluations of staff performance.

These results support findings from Altuhaini's (2015: 738) study. Practising translators who had studied EFL/TS in the Saudi system as well as managers of Saudi translation agencies highlighted concerns within the Saudi translation industry. These concerns had to do with the lack of lecturers with appropriate academic specialisms or with the lack of professionally experienced translator trainers in Saudi universities. This mismatch between academic qualifications and teaching commitments in the Saudi context has also been highlighted by Fatani (2007; 2009), herself a practising professional translator. It was further reiterated more recently by Abu-Ghararah (2017).

This mismatch appears to be a long-standing problem in EFL/TS departments in Saudi higher education. As part of his doctoral research, Alfaifi (2000) conducted a survey of the staff teaching translation to undergraduates EFL/TS Department at Al Imam University. He reported that at the time of the study, none of the staff respondents in the sample indicated specialist academic expertise in translation or any professional experience as translators.

However, data from the staff profiles of the present study's respondents suggest that a new generation of younger university staff may have begun to benefit from access to specialist courses. This access was obtained during abroad study, through immersion in other university cultures, and from exposure to different teaching approaches as a result of Saudi government-funded educational initiatives such as the King Abdullah Scholarship Programme (see Section 1.2.1).

In the medium term, the appointment of younger staff who have benefitted from these opportunities that were not available to their older colleagues may help to address the lack of academic specialists. In the longer term, as these young lecturers rise through the ranks to more senior positions within EFL/TS departments, they can be expected to gain access to greater opportunities to contribute to curriculum design. These staff can thereby begin to exercise an overall positive influence on the teaching and learning culture. This shift is likely to be even more marked among EFL/TS departments in female universities – for many years ago, the opportunity to study outside Saudi Arabia was rarely granted to women due to a combination of socio-cultural, religious, and legal constraints.

In the short term, however, this lack of appropriately qualified, skilled, or experienced staff seems likely to persist until EFL/TS departments make concerted efforts to identify these areas of disagreement between the current academic profile and the curriculum to be delivered. As previously noted in Chapter 5, the existing NCAAA (2015: 14) system for quality assurance and accreditation within the HE sector clearly states that "staff must be appropriately qualified and experienced for their particular teaching responsibilities". Thus, to ensure that their courses meet the necessary standards of quality, universities are obliged to address this shortage either by making new staff appointments or by rolling out a targeted programme of continuing professional development. Professional translator trainers with recent and relevant experience could also be engaged to deliver timetabled workshops aimed at developing particular competencies or introducing students to specific translation technologies. These

workshops would provide a valuable input to the course, giving students access to individuals with real-life experience in translation in either the private or the public sector.

One student respondent (KAR6S) also identified another potentially useful short-term solution to the lack of staff with professional translating experience. This student, based at the Rabigh Campus of KAU, suggested that graduates who are now employed as professional translators could deliver non-obligatory sessions on areas not included in lectures or classes. Alternatively, these graduates could be invited to participate in workshops to pass on their knowledge and experience. This approach would also increase current students' awareness of the requirements of the job market and the range of opportunities available.

After discussing the problems posed by the profile of staff teaching translation in EFL/TS courses and some potential solutions, the next section focuses on the equally important issue of using pedagogical methods that are appropriate for translator training.

8.3 The Lack of Effective Translator Training Methodologies

The second issue which emerged from the questionnaires findings relates to the ineffectiveness of the teaching methods employed by staff on translation-related modules. This issue may also be linked somewhat to the previous concern about staff qualifications, expertise, and experience.

The NCAAA (2015: 11) framework specifies the need for "teaching strategies appropriate for the type of learning involved". However, both staff and student and graduate evaluations of methods of teaching and assessment on translation modules revealed a lack of effective translator training methodologies. 40% of non-KAU staff expressed their dissatisfaction to some extent with current methods of teaching translation. Saudi students' rates of satisfaction with teaching were also found to be considerably low. In addition, the student questionnaire item about the range of methods used for teaching translation revealed that at some institutions, a narrow range of traditional teacher-centred methods are still employed; students indicated the continued use of the now largely discredited traditional grammar-translation method. After having experienced the translation market, the graduates also recommended that translation courses change their learning techniques such as by adopting different translational methodologies and incorporating more practical advice. Furthermore, some lecturers were still expecting students to strive for the 'correct' TL version of the SL text (the lecturer's own 'model' translation), rather than helping students to develop strategies for approaching texts.

The staff questionnaire revealed another concern related to the effectiveness of teaching. Namely, some respondents seemed unclear about how their performance as teachers was evaluated. These responses indicate two possible issues. First, the lack of awareness among teacher respondents about evaluation methods may indicate that these lecturers did not receive regular feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching methods. In that case, their institution is not adhering to NCAAA quality assurance procedures. The framework states,

"Teaching quality and the effectiveness of programs must be evaluated through student assessments and graduate and employer surveys, with feedback used as a basis for plans for improvement" (NCAAA, 2015: 15). However, the comparison of graduate questionnaire responses with current undergraduate students' responses showed that both groups of students consider the teaching practices implemented for translation modules to be more than adequate. Second, and perhaps regardless, these responses point to the fact that these individuals have not grasped or do not accept the importance of teacher performance appraisal and its link to "achieving high-level student performance" as "an integral part of the teaching/learning process" (Al-Jarf, 2015: 1). Some means of systematically gathering information about the extent to which learning outcomes have been achieved must be in place. Without such means, it is difficult to judge the degree to which different methods can be considered effective and to assess what type of support is needed for professional development to improve teaching skills.

Researchers have identified the lack of effective translator training methodologies as a persistent shortcoming of Saudi HE provisions in EFL and translation courses (Alfaifi, 2000; Alsahli, 2012; Altuhaini, 2015). However, the results from the questionnaires regarding the range of methods used for teaching translation may provide some grounds for cautious optimism. The data showed that in at least some of the institutions surveyed – though unfortunately not at KAU – more innovative approaches to teaching translation are being introduced to help develop the kind of skills required by professional translators in the workplace. Examples include the use of practical workshops, group work, timed tasks, projects, peer review, and autonomous learning. Nonetheless, despite these positive developments, both staff and student respondents

complained about the continued overemphasis on translation theories and the use of teaching styles oriented towards information delivery at the expense of practical application of theories and student-centred learning and skill development. This tendency to privilege theory over practice was also acknowledged by Altuhaini (2015: 738) as a more general problem within translator training in the Saudi system.

The range of challenges that EFL/TS faces as a subject in the Saudi university sector (Syed, 2003; Moskovsky and Alrabai, 2009; Alghamdi, 2017) and the continued predominance of traditional pedagogy within the Kingdom's education system have been discussed previously in the introduction to this thesis. These challenges arise in particular from the modes of teacher-learner interaction (Liton, 2012) and the prevalence of assessments which are dependent on memorisation and rote learning (Darandari and Murphy, 2013). Student responses were sometimes contradictory or difficult to interpret. For example, in several cases, even within the same institution, a considerable proportion of students thought too little contact time were spent on improving linguistic skills in EFL/TS while an equally large group thought too much time was spent on it at the expense of developing translation abilities. Opinions from both staff and students regarding the right time to introduce translation within the course were equally diverse. These results are likely to reflect the difficulties of trying to accommodate the extremely diverse ability range in EFL/TS that is typical of the Saudi system. This disagreement among staff and student responses suggests that EFL departments should develop a separate translation strand within their degree programmes with appropriate methods of teaching and assessment.

Further, EFL/TS departments should apply strict admission criteria to these degree programmes, accepting only those students who are able to demonstrate the appropriate linguistic abilities, aptitude, and motivation to specialise in this field. This approach may also help to address some of the issues relating to student expectations and attitudes noted in Chapter 6. In other words, the differences in the methodological approach and vocational orientation of the course would be made clear from the outset to students seeking admission.

A common curriculum for all EFL students could be followed in the first year of the degree course (semester three[43]) followed by a split into specialisms, including translation, at the start of the second year (semester five) of the course. Students would then be allowed to concentrate on improving their language skills in English (L2) and Modern Standard Arabic (L1) during both the foundation stage (semesters one and two) and the first year (semesters three and four) of the course. Other translation-related competences[44] could then form the focus of the remainder of the degree.

As this section has identified some of the difficulties raised by how translation is taught in degree courses in Saudi Arabia, the next section considers whether the course content prepares graduates to become members of the translating

[43] As previously noted, all Saudi students must complete an obligatory Foundation Year, also referred to in some universities as the Preparatory Year Programme.

[44] According to the definition from the European Master's in Translation competence framework (Toudic and Krause, 2017: 3), competence "means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development."

profession, thus meeting the current market needs within the Kingdom and more broadly within the region.

8.4 Course Content

8.4.1 Student perceptions of course content

Another key issue that emerged from the questionnaire responses was the extent to which staff, students and graduates thought course content prepared graduates to enter the field of professional translation. Evidence from staff questionnaires revealed that most staff respondents thought that the current programme at their institution was partly successful in preparing graduates for a career in translation. Some staff explained that they had given this answer largely on the grounds that the degree course in which they taught was not designed solely or even principally to prepare students to enter this profession. This observation about course design was also reported by the graduates, who had already completed the course and entered the translation market. Though the graduates viewed the teaching methods of TS courses as more than adequate, they expressed a need to change the course content by incorporating more practical elements, as the graduates had found such activities to be helpful in improving their actual translation experience.

Relevant extracts from the course/departmental objectives of several of the universities represented in the study have been reproduced below (see Table 8.1). These objectives clearly show that some departments are more specific in detailing the degree to which the departments aim to prepare their graduates for

employment as professional linguists. It is striking that only TU uses the verb 'train', which is more frequently associated with the teaching of vocational skills; yet even in TU's case, the reference to "principles and mechanisms" seems to imply that both theory and practice are included in the course. Although PNU refers to fulfilling "needs for specialists in the field of […] translation", whether this objective refers to academic specialists remains unclear. Only KSU is specific about the employability of its students, stating that it produces "graduates with the specialist skills to fulfil the needs of the labour market". In the case of KAU, the only course objective that mentions translation is not explicitly linked to any desired professional outcome.

Table 8.1: Course/departmental objectives of the universities represented in the study

KAU	"To teach translation and mastery of its different fields" http://european-languages.kau.edu.sa/Default.aspx?Site_ID=12506&lng=EN
KKU	"To produce specialists in languages and translation"
KSU	• "To provide theoretical and practical knowledge in the fields of English and translation" • "To produce graduates with the specialist skills to fulfil the needs of the labour market" http://colt.ksu.edu.sa/ar/about-us
PNU	"To fulfil needs for specialists in the field of languages and translation" http://www.pnu.edu.sa/en/Faculties/Languages/Pages/Default.aspx
TU	"To train [students] in the principles and mechanisms of translation" http://colleges.tu.edu.sa/en/art/Depts/foreign_language/About/Pages/Vision.aspx
UQU	• "To present the main issues, principles and methods of translation and analyse differences between Arabic and English sentence structure" • "To introduce translation theories and apply these to find solutions while translating" https://uqu.edu.sa/social-sciences/ar/1126

The results of the student questionnaire showed that over half of the respondents for both KAU and the other institutions thought that the course they were following would not prepare them for work as a professional translator. However, before concluding that a misalignment exists between the course content and the competences needed to become a professional translator in Saudi Arabia, the reasons why students responded in this manner deserve further scrutiny. Examining these reasons may shed light on broader issues such as course administration and student engagement.

One in five of the student respondents, referring to the full sample including students from both KAU and elsewhere, stated they were unsure about whether the course objectives were clear or not. This lack of certainty may suggest that students were not even aware of these objectives, pointing either to possible shortcomings in how this information is conveyed to students or to students failing to take responsibility for their own learning. Universities must ensure that information is available to students, but at the same time, students must also ensure that they are well informed about their responsibilities and rights as learners. Many Saudi universities now provide a charter which lists students' responsibilities in detail; upon admittance to the institution, students must sign this document.[45]

[45] An English version of an example of a charter for Foundation Year students at PNU can be viewed on the university's website:http://www.pnu.edua.ca/en/ViceRectorates/VRHA/Constitutive/Pages/Students/Charter/aspx.
At PNU, students' rights are not detailed in the charter, but presented elsewhere on the PNU. It acts as a document emphasising the nature of the contractual relationship between university and the student body.

Some student indicated that these respondents may have had unrealistic expectations about the extent to which their undergraduate courses would prepare them for a career as a professional translator. Indeed, the graduates indicated that they had held unrealistic expectations at the start of their EFL/TS course. Clearly, taking one or two modules as part of an EFL course would not qualify an individual for a position within a translation agency or private company immediately after graduating. These unrealistic expectations may indicate the need to better inform students about the translation industry in Saudi Arabia as part of a career guidance component, a component which could be linked to the extracurricular programme suggested above (see Section 8.4.1) As Hooley (2017: 283) notes, the Kingdom "has a weak tradition of career guidance and a need to develop new policies and systems rapidly." Hooley sees the Saudi Government's interest in the concept of career guidance as part of a broader realisation of the need for "engagement of the Saudi 'youth bulge'[46] in the labour market and wider society". This effort at engagement will also include the development of a more vocational education system, as repeatedly stressed in Saudi Vision 2030, the national transformation plan (see Section 9.4).

Analysis of the students' responses concerning the qualities students deemed necessary for a professional translator suggests that many respondents had a grasp of at least some of the competences required to seek employment within

[46] The term 'youth bulge' refers to a demographic pattern where a large percentage of a national population is made up of children and young adults. This pattern is currently typical of countries in the MENA region.

this profession (see Table 8.2). Schäffner's (2005) concise but insightful description of the competence profile needed by a good professional translator is helpful. She summarises these competences as a combination of "knowledge (knowing what), skills (knowing how), and ability to reflect (knowing why)" (Schäffner, 2005: 247).

Table 8.2: Analysis of student respondents' suggestions concerning competences required by a professional translator

Language skills
High level competence in L1 (Modern Standard Arabic)
High level competence in L2 (English)
Broad active/passive L1 vocabulary
Broad active/passive L2 vocabulary
Translation skills
Clarity in written expression
Accuracy
Speed
Mental agility
Knowledge
Good general knowledge
Intercultural awareness
Broad knowledge of discourse/text types and style
Specialist knowledge
Employability attributes
IT skills
Self-confidence
Determination
Flexibility
Good interpersonal skills
Professionalism

These responses arguably indicate that the Saudi students surveyed have a firm grasp of the importance of the first two areas identified by Schäffner (2005), i.e. 'knowing what' and 'knowing how'. Despite the students and graduates grasping the importance of language skills to becoming a professional translator, the

employer interviews showed that most of the graduates have 'poor language skills' along with poor teamwork and IT skills which are highly required in the job market according to the JD analysis obtained by Albatineh and Bilali (2017). These weaknesses could be due to students' apparent lack of awareness of Schäffner's third quality, 'knowing why'; indeed, no mention was made of any areas of the curriculum related to the ability to reflect on the process of translation, for example, analytical skills. This omission can be linked to other student comments regarding translation theory's perceived lack of usefulness. In addition, it can be related to the high percentages of students who expressed their dissatisfaction with the extent to which they felt that the translation theories included in the course had been applied in translation practice. The combination of all these data can be said to confirm one of the points made earlier and to raise a further concern.

The point confirmed again is that theory is privileged over practice; the students' failure to perceive the usefulness of translation theory further indicates the lack of integration of the theoretical and the practical components in Saudi translation courses (see Section 8.2). Students and graduates may have valid reasons for feeling that the content of the course they are following lacks coherence in terms of theory and practice. During his study of translation teaching at Al Imam University, Alfaifi (2000) discovered that the tutor of a module was the one who determined the module's contents; thus, if a new member was appointed to the teaching staff, that new tutor might decide to change the contents of the module. Without overall coordination at the departmental/course level, such

changes in a module could result in significant shifts in the material being taught to students, in turn significantly undermining academic coherence.

In theory, the potential for situations of this kind to occur was effectively eliminated within the university sector by the introduction of the NCAAA framework in 2015. However, as evidence from both staff and student respondents has revealed, this system of quality assurance is yet to be firmly embedded within many Saudi HE institutions.

The further concern raised by the omission of analytical skills from the students' lists of competences required of professional translators is that a more fundamental flaw is inherent in some degree programmes in Saudi Arabia. Namely, programmes are not developing reflective practice, i.e. the students' ability to reflect on their experience of learning.

In the context of the British HE system, Philip (2006: 37) identified two of the principal barriers to undergraduates learning how to benefit from reflective practice: (1) the modular system and (2) the "assessment-driven nature of students". In the Saudi context, these two barriers are even more likely to prevent EFL/TS students from realising the need to reflect on their translation practice using insights from theory and, more broadly, to reflect on and learn from the experience of learning itself. The power of these barriers in the Saudi context is due to the fact that, for those studying within the Saudi HE system, achieving a degree is typically viewed in terms of managing to pass the

assessment for each module. One of the major disadvantages of the compartmentalised nature of the modular system in HE is that students are not encouraged to make broader links between the various components of their degree course. As a result, students may fail to transfer the knowledge and skills acquired in one module (for example, translation theory) to other modules (for example, translation as a practice).

The current Saudi HE system may be failing to include reflection in the learning experience of some EFL/TS students. This failure is particularly concerning in the context of EFL/TS courses, since one of the fundamental skills required of a translator is the ability "to see the bigger picture". Translators must understand that individual words form not only part of a text but also, beyond that, part of a context. Without understanding the nature of the relationship between words and the whole text, students will find it impossible to transfer meaning accurately from one language to another.

This section has explored the staff, student and graduate questionnaires and employer interviews responses about underlying shortcomings in the curriculum of EFL/TS courses. The next two sections focus specifically on the extent to which the translation programmes at Saudi universities teaching translation provide the graduates with the vocational skills required to meet the current needs of the professional market in Saudi Arabia.

8.5 Meeting the Market Needs of Translation in Saudi Arabia

The evidence indicates that, within the course content of the Saudi universities explored, two areas point to a potentially serious lack of alignment between university courses and current market needs of translation in Saudi Arabia. The first of these areas is the range of text types offered within the translation modules and courses.

8.5.1 Text types

Students were asked which elements the course should include in order to produce graduates prepared to meet the needs of the current job market. They suggested that exposure to more text types was most important. The students' comments offer evidence that some students feel the current material they are given to translate does not prepare them sufficiently for the kind of texts they are likely to encounter as professional translators. Again, this lack of preparation appears to be a long-standing issue with Saudi translation courses. When Alfaifi (2000) surveyed a sample of students in the translation course at Al-Imam University, he found that 66.7% of the respondents thought that the text types they were exposed to in the course had little to no relevance to the real-life demands of their future career as professional translators.

As previously noted in this chapter, researchers have commented on the difficulties of assessing the actual needs of the translation market in Saudi Arabia, due in large part to the fact that there is no easy way to gather data on those needs as a result of the "lack of proper regulation, certification and

auditing" (Altuhaini, 2015: 742) in the Saudi translation industry (Fatani, 2009; Abu-Ghararah, 2017). Currently, regardless of the level of their qualifications, many individuals who have studied EFL/TS in Saudi Arabia or elsewhere set themselves up to work as freelancers, operating from home. The exact nature of the work that these freelancers do is therefore unknown. Abdullah Alkhamis (2012) has provided an analysis of the translations published by the three main book publishers in Saudi Arabia, namely Jarir, Obeikan, and Dar Al-Mareekh; this study, as shown in Figure 8.1, offers some insights into the kind of translated works that find an audience in Saudi Arabia.

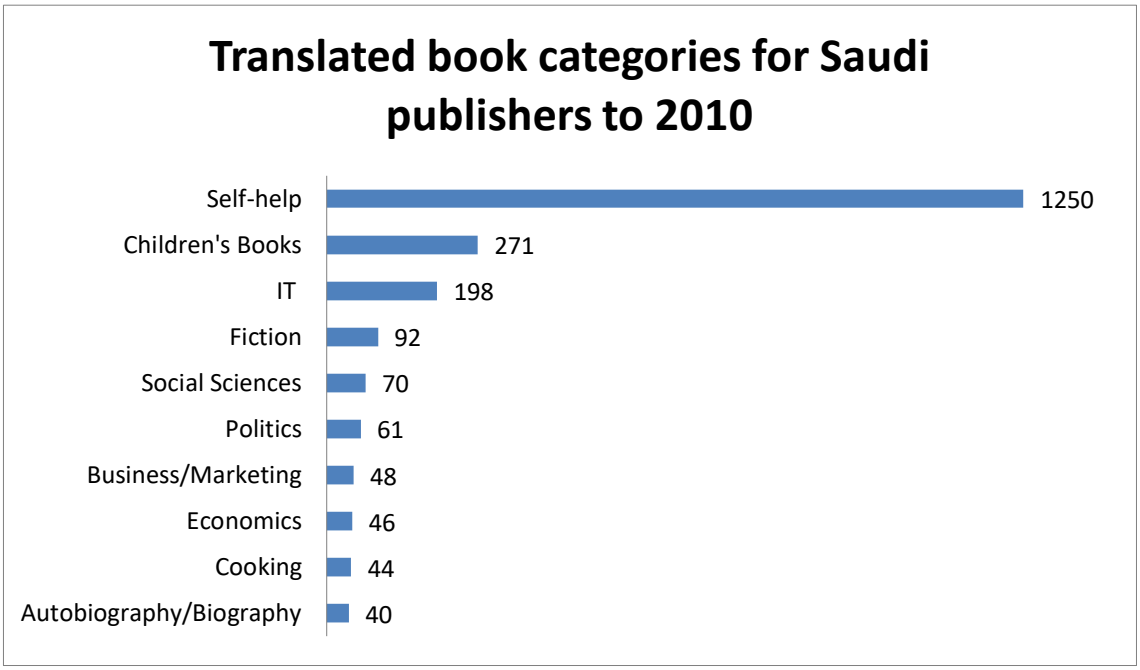


Figure 8.1: Translations commissioned by three Saudi publishers (Obeikan, Jarir, and Dar Al-Mareekh) based on figures provided by Alkhamis (2012)

Figure 8.1 is based on an analysis conducted by Alkhamis (2012) of the list of publications for three of Saudi Arabia's leading publishers that were described in the publishers' catalogues as translations from non-Arabic source texts. The

numbers shown in Figure 8.1 refer to the number of works that have been published within each category since the publishing company was founded. The source language for these books was not always English. However, other works were translated from authors writing in Turkish, Pashto and Farsi (Alkhamis 2012: 114). Alkhamis' analysis provides a useful indication of the type of books that private sector publishers are willing to pay translators for on the grounds that the publishers believe there is a market for such books in Saudi Arabia.

Given the shortage of other recent studies specifically on the Saudi market, here it is also useful to draw on the results of a study by Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) (see Section 4.3.3). They analysed the curriculum content of BA and MA translator training courses from a sample of university programmes in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), including some Saudi institutions. They compared the results of their curriculum analysis with a sample of job descriptions for posts advertised online. The authors acknowledged that one of the potential shortcomings of this approach was that not all translation posts are advertised online via professional job portals, especially posts related to literary and diplomatic translation. Nonetheless, their study provides valuable insight into the realities of the current situation regarding translation across the Arabic-speaking MENA region. Moreover, the employers interviewed in the present research indicated that posting on the company website and on social media are their most commonly used ways of posting about translator jobs, indicating that advertising translator posts online is becoming more widespread.

Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) overall aim was to ascertain the extent to which what was being taught on these translator training courses could be said to match the current needs of the market for professional translation in the MENA countries. The fact that their study was carried out in a sample of MENA countries makes their results a useful point of reference for the text types and professional translator competences that are currently in demand more broadly within the Arabic-speaking world. Clearly though, within these data, there will also be some distinctive country-specific needs. Table 8.3 shows the results of their analysis. While the MA data is not of immediate relevance to the present study, it has been included; the content of such specialist and presumably more vocationally oriented courses would be more closely aligned with market needs than that of undergraduate courses, which aim to prepare students for a broader range of career destinations.

Table 8.3: Breakdown of field-specific content of BA translation modules vs. specialist fields mentioned in the corpus of job descriptions (JD) (Source: Al-Batineh and Bilali, 2017: 197)

Field-specific translation modules	**BA courses**	**% BA courses**	**MA courses**	**% MA courses**	**JD mentions**	**% JD mentions**
Financial	7	21%	17	22%	7	18%
Legal	10	29%	17	22%	9	23%
Literary	3	9%	19	25%	1	3%
Media	4	12%	7	9%	2	5%
Medical	4	12%	6	8%	8	21%
Religious	1	3%	4	5%	---	---
Technical	5	15%	6	8%	12	31%
Total	**34**	**100%**	**76**	**100%**	**39**	**100%**

According to Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) analysis of the data, at the time of the study, the areas of specialisation most requested by translation agencies across the MENA region were in the technical, legal, medical, and financial fields. Based on the data in Table 8.3, the most significant misalignment between current course content across both BA and MA courses and market needs can be found in the areas of technical and medical expertise. Ironically, given that one might expect MA courses in the technical and medical fields to be of a more vocational nature, the mismatch between field-specific translation modules and market needs is particularly striking in the case of the MA courses. Literary translation accounts for 25% of the provision at this level versus a market demand of just 3%; moreover, only 8% of the modules in the sample focused on technical subjects versus a market demand of 31%.

Findings from Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) research suggest that large numbers of the participants in the present Saudi study said they were planning to take a postgraduate programme in translation. These participants assumed that this postgraduate programme would provide better preparation for working as a professional translator; however, in reality, this supposition may not be the case. A course that focuses largely on literary translation will help students to develop specific competences, but not all these competences will necessarily be transferable to the text types and subjects required by market needs (refer to the communicative and textual competence along with Interpersonal competence, which are the subcompetences given by Kelly (2002)).

Since the MENA countries share many common features because of their Islamic culture and heritage and similar socio-economic profiles, some of Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) results are also likely to be representative of Saudi Arabia's needs. These results correspond with the finding of the employer interviews conducted in Saudi Arabia which validate the previous study findings. For example, based on Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) analysis for the job requirements in MENA and the results of the employers' interviews, there is a demand for technical translation continues to be related to the oil, gas, and petrochemical sector, which is still the mainstay of the Kingdom's economy (Fatani, 2009). However, this need is not fulfilled by the competences offered in EFL/TS courses. In addition, the many non-Arabic-speaking doctors and consultants in hospitals and medical centres in Saudi Arabia require the services of translators to help them understand medical reports and patient records (Abu-Ghararah, 2017). Similarly, Saudi patients who have been treated by specialists overseas often return with medical files written in English that Saudi physicians and nurses must consult.

However, while Saudi Arabia shares some features with its Arabic-speaking neighbours across the region, it has developed its own distinctive social, legal, and governmental systems as well as its own unique cultural characteristics. Thus, Saudi Arabia's translation market has also developed its own distinctive requirements. Within the legal domain, for example, a high demand exists for professional translators who can deal with the massive quantities of

documentation needed in the processing of the millions of guest workers hosted by the Kingdom (Abu-Ghararah, 2017).[47]

Kelly (2010: 89) asserts that "universities should cater in their curricular design not only for the present, but for future social and market needs". As previously noted, finding meaningful statistics concerning the current translation market in Saudi Arabia is already difficult; accordingly, predicting future trends for specialist fields may well be considered an impossible task. However, as explained in the introduction to this thesis (see Section 1.2.2), a major national transformation plan for the Kingdom known as Saudi Vision 2030 was launched in April 2016 by HRH Mohammed bin Salman (who was then Chairman of the Saudi Council of Economic and Development Affairs). This strategy document may indicate some areas that may require consideration for inclusion as specialist areas in translation training.

Saudi Vision 2030 emphasises the diversification of the Saudi economy away from what is popularly referred to as the Kingdom's 'addiction to oil'. One of the key areas that the plan targets, for example, is the development of religious and cultural tourism. Amongst the plan's objectives under this heading are to "establish more museums, prepare new tourist and historical sites and cultural

[47] There is also a need for translators who can translate from Tagalog, Indonesian, Urdu, Thai, Bengali, Sinhalese, Pashto, Swahili, Amharic, and Vietnamese into Arabic, since these languages correspond to the cultures of origin of the largest communities of guest workers (Abu-Ghararah, 2017: 113).

venues, and improve the pilgrimage experience within the Kingdom" (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016: 17). More specifically, two key objectives follow:

> To increase our capacity to welcome *Umrah* [pilgrimage] visitors from 8 million to 30 million every year
>
> To more than double the number of Saudi heritage sites registered with UNESCO (*Vision 2030*, 2016: 19)

English is often used as a lingua franca within the tourist industry and amongst visiting pilgrims. Thus, growth in the tourism sector is highly likely to generate new market needs within Saudi Arabia, particularly given the considerable amount of documentation that must accompany any application for UNESCO recognition.

A second area of possible interest to designers of translation training curricula, and an area that is linked to more technical concerns, is the marked shift signalled within the Saudi Vision 2030 transformation plan towards environmental sustainability within the Kingdom:

> We will seek to safeguard our environment by increasing the efficiency of waste management, establishing comprehensive recycling projects, reducing all types of pollution and fighting desertification. (Saudi Vision 2030*,* 2016: 23).

This statement is also accompanied by the announcement of a Renewable Energy Initiative (*Vision 2030,* 2016: 49).

Several of these areas represent comparatively new concerns for Saudi Arabia. Translators will likely play a key role in helping to transfer expertise and know-how into Arabic in those scientific and technical fields in which most research papers and technical reports have to date been published in English only.

With the benefit of the input from studies by Fatani (2009), AlKhamis (2012), Abu-Ghararah (2017), Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017), and Altuhaini (2015), it is helpful to reconsider the data relating to staff respondents' ranking of the perceived importance of text types in relation to how text types align with the needs of the Saudi job market.

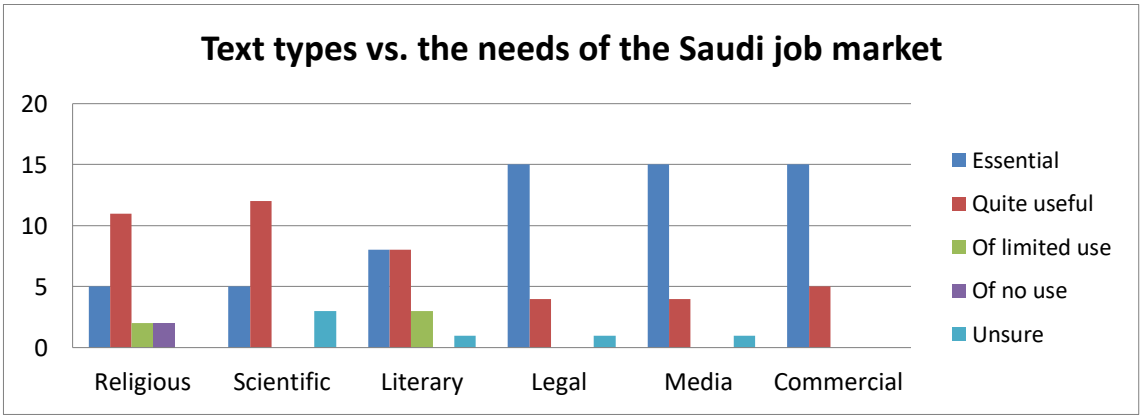


Figure 8.2: Text types vs. needs of the Saudi job market

Figure 8.2 suggests that the relative importance of both religious and literary text types within the job market has probably been overestimated by the EFL/TS lecturers in the sample. At the same time, the need for expertise in translating scientific/technical text types has been significantly underestimated. This importance of religious text types is justified in this research from the interview responses of the employers, who indicated that 'Endorse Saudiism' as the top

reason for recruiting the graduates from the Saudi universities with degrees in language and translation courses. Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) study suggested that the market for media-related translation within the region is relatively small; however, as previously noted (see Chapter 1), due to Saudi Arabia's specific Islamic traditions and social customs, Arabisation or localising of Western media products, particularly television shows, is a growing phenomenon (Haschke, 2012). Yet without experience in using the relevant translation technology for subtitling, for example, students would not be able to translate audiovisual texts successfully.

This analysis underlines why it is good practice to consult stakeholders from the world of professional translation when developing a new translation curriculum, as stakeholders will be aware of the changing market for professional translation services (Mayoral Asensio, 2001). The involvement of professional translators, translation agencies, employers and representatives of public and private translation associations can help to ensure that the proposed content is more likely to align with current market needs (Altuhaini, 2015). This practice is also recommended under the terms of the NCAAA (2015: 6) framework, which states that "stakeholders should have substantial involvement in planning and review processes with feedback regularly obtained, analysed, and responded to".

Having considered the extent to which there may be a lack of alignment between text types and current translation modules on EFL/TS courses for Saudi undergraduates, the next section focuses on another area of concern relating to

course content and current market needs that emerges from the questionnaire results: that of IT skills and translation technology.

8.6 IT Skills and Translation Technology

Students and graduates were asked whether they felt they had acquired the IT skills required to work professionally as translators. In the questionnaire results for students from both KAU and the other Saudi universities, respondents fell into two directly opposing camps. Virtually equal numbers of students stated that they were either satisfied or dissatisfied with this element of the course. Comments made later by those who had expressed dissatisfaction with the IT element revealed that they were concerned about how little attention is paid to what they grasped as a now vital aspect of professional translation practice. Comments of this kind also suggested that those students who had described themselves as satisfied were largely ignorant of the broad range of roles which IT skills and specialist tools and applications now play in the various stages of the translation process. These stages include initial research, tracking and monitoring of progress towards completion, and production of the final document. Analysis of Saudi translation course curriculum components confirms that IT skills comprise an area where alignment with contemporary working practices in the translation industry is severely lacking.

The graduates reported IT skills as having little importance in their ability to become professional translators. However, the interviews with the employers in Saudi Arabia from different market segments highlighted poor IT skills as one of

the top weaknesses of graduates in the Saudi translator market. In short, both current undergraduate students and graduates of EFL/TS courses may be largely ignorant of the fact that IT skills are now an important requirement for future translators.

Mayoral Asensio (2001) has highlighted the need for translation training courses to be responsive to new technological developments. Translation technology skills are in "increasingly high demand" (Altuhaini, 2015: 738) in translation work and constitute an "ever-growing presence […] in the life of a translator" (Greere and Tătaru, 2008: 102). These translation technology skills have been more supported by the professional and instrumental competence, which is referred as the research and technology by Kelly (2002: 32-33).

According to the European Master's in Translation (EMT) competence framework, the technology (tools and applications) competence includes "all the knowledge and skills used to implement present and future translation technologies within the translation process (see Section 4.2.3). It also includes basic knowledge of machine translation technologies and the ability to implement machine translation according to potential needs" (EMT, 2017: 9).

A list of competences (see Table 4.3) (numbered 15-20 in the original EMT document) is included in the EMT competence framework (see Table 8.4). This list provides a good indication of the many different roles that technology, in the form of various tools and applications, can play in the translation process. This

list is intended to cover the competences that should be acquired by students following a postgraduate course; however, undergraduate students and curriculum designers should at the very least be made aware of the need "to move away from pen and paper", as one student respondent (KSU8S) put it.

Table 8.4: Translation technology (tools and applications) competences (EMT, 2017: 9)

15	Use the most relevant IT applications, including the full range of office software, and adapt rapidly to new tools and IT resources
16	Make effective use of search engines, corpus-based tools, text analysis tools and CAT [Computer-Assisted Translation] tools
17	Pre-process, process and manage files and other media/sources as part of the translation, e.g. video and multimedia files, handle web technologies
18	Master the basics of MT [Machine Translation] and its impact on the translation process
19	Assess the relevance of MT systems in a translation workflow and implement the appropriate MT system where relevant
20	Apply other tools in support of language and translation technology, such as workflow management software

Other findings from Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) study suggest that the failure to provide students with translation-related technology practice and information is not simply a shortcoming in Saudi university courses; the failure, in fact, may represent a bigger issue across the MENA region as a whole. In addition to examining the subject-specific domains that translation agencies are looking for,

the researchers also analysed the translation competences in job descriptions, making use of the framework designed by Kelly (2005: 32–33) (see Section 4.2.1).

Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017) then mapped the list of skills required by the market mentioned in their sample of job descriptions against Kelly's (2005) competences (see Table 8.5). Their findings highlight the magnitude of the gap between professional and instrumental competences (which in Kelly's model include both translation technology and research skills) and the needs of the market.

Table 8.5: Analysis of BA and MA training curricula vs. job descriptions (JD) using Kelly's competence model (2005)

Competences	**BA courses**	**% BA courses**	**MA courses**	**% MA courses**	**JD mentions**	**% JD mentions**
Communicative & textual	123	56%	59	21%	20	18%
Cultural & intercultural	15	7%	34	12%	3	3%
Subject area	45	20%	100	36%	15	13%
Professional & instrumental	**23**	**10%**	**60**	**22%**	**56**	**50%**
Strategic	15	7%	23	8%	6	5%
Interpersonal	---	---	---	---	12	11%
Attitudinal/psycho-physiological	---	---	---	---	---	---
Total	**221**	**100%**	**276**	**100%**	**112**	**100%**

Only 10% of the undergraduate courses studied offered IT and translation technology components and/or research skills. Moreover, even at the postgraduate level, only 22% of the courses sampled featured these elements in the curriculum; in comparison, half of the job descriptions required such

competences. A more detailed breakdown of the courses that the researchers found offered in this area in the sample of universities they studied, together with the specific skills requested in job descriptions, can be seen in Table 8.5.

Table 8.5: Curricula and job descriptions (JD) mapped onto Kelly's (2005) professional and instrumental competence (Al-Batineh and Bilali, 2017: 203)

	COURSES	**MARKET REQUIRED SKILLS**
PROFESSIONAL AND INSTRUMENTAL COMPETENCE	AV Translation AV Translation Theories CAT Tools MT Computer Literacy Research Terminology Translator Skills	Experience in translation and localisation CAT tools experience Experience in project management Subtitling experience Experience with MT Experience in DTP Computer skills

Key to abbreviations: **AV**=audiovisual **CAT**=computer-assisted translation **MT**=machine translation **DTP**=desk-top publishing

Fatani (2007) examined the factors inhibiting the integration of translation technology in EFL courses in Saudi. She concluded that Saudi workplace has developed in terms of technology, but this hasn't been reflected in translator training courses (Fatani, 2007: 1).

A decade later, Reima Al-Jarf (2017) described the experiences recounted by female graduates who had taken the two obligatory IT-related modules at the College of Languages and Translation at KSU in Riyadh, where the BA course in EFL lasts for five years. Over the course of that time, students take just two modules related to IT skills and translation technology. In the foundation year, all students must take an obligatory computer literacy module. In this module,

students are introduced to computer components and hardware and are meant to be trained to use the MS Word, PowerPoint, and Excel software programs. However, interviewees reported that by the end of the course, which was delivered by teaching assistants who held a BA in Computer Studies, attendees had not even mastered basic word-processing and presentation skills. Interviewees also explained that in the more advanced module that was for translation students only, called Computer Applications in Translation, students were only introduced to general theoretical issues relating to MT; students were never given the chance to actually use and practice with any MT systems. Al-Jarf (2017) also reported that many students still produce handwritten translation assignments because they lack the keyboard skills necessary to word process the assignments.

The situation Al-Jarf (2017) reported regarding research skills was, if anything, even more troubling. Most interviewees in her sample explained that "In most specialized translation courses that they took, they checked paper dictionaries or a pocket electronic dictionary" (Al-Jarf, 2017: 3). This practice was due to their lack of familiarity with online resources such as dictionaries, glossaries, and terminology databanks, and many students struggled to even use Internet search engines such as Google effectively.

This example from a highly respected Saudi university graphically illustrates the gap between current market needs and EFL undergraduate competence in even basic IT and research skills. The gap is even greater when considering the

sophisticated level of competence that would be required to operate CAT tools, MT software, project management, or DTP programmes and the expertise needed to approach the translation of specialised technical or scientific texts. The report also confirms Altuhaini's (2015: 738) findings, since all the Saudi professional linguists and their employers who participated in his study "expressed their dissatisfaction with the skills of Saudi translators with regard to translation technology and asserted that universities needed to prioritise this in their curricula and training".

Overall, it appears that (1) little has changed over the course of a decade in terms of the failure to integrate translation technology into Saudi HE courses, (2) theory continues to be privileged at the expense of practice, and (3) Saudi students lack the kind of independent learning skills.

Unfortunately, these key skills seem to be the same skills that the average Saudi EFL/TS undergraduate is still failing to develop, due in large part to the various reasons highlighted in this chapter.

An additional concern merits attention in the Saudi context. The staff profile revealed by the questionnaire – particularly the staff profile at KAU – suggests that unless there is a well-developed programme of continuing professional development in these institutions, i.e. one that would enable staff to rapidly update their knowledge and competences, current lecturers are likely to struggle if asked to teach modules related to translation technology. Older lecturers

without any recent experience in IT skills and/or familiarity with translation software and other tools and applications would not be in a position to teach courses relating to the type of specialist skills required currently by professional translators. As noted in Chapter 8 (8.2), the NCAAA framework already requires university teaching staff to be committed to self-development. However, older practitioners may well react negatively if they feel they are being pressured into acquiring new competences and are likely to show resistance and lack enthusiasm for new developments in such circumstances (Al-Naqbi, 2011). This lack of enthusiasm is then likely to be transmitted to the students that they are tasked with teaching.

Moreover, as Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017: 199) highlight, the demands of the translation market and methods of working are rapidly evolving, meaning that universities will need to be constantly monitoring developments in the field. Universities will then need to respond to these changes by updating curriculum content and redesigning courses if their intention is to produce employable graduates. Possible short-term solutions to the current skill deficit amongst academic staff in relation to translation training might entail bringing in the necessary expertise from the industry to run workshops and offer students taster sessions with different translation technology tools and applications. The more general lack of IT skills could also be addressed by the *Maharat min Google* (Skills in Google) initiative referred to in Section 6.7.9.

Another possible solution would be to incorporate work placements or offer internships as an optional part of the degree course. This option would give translation students the opportunity to use translation technology tools and applications and to learn more about the different types of translation-related roles, including project manager or terminology specialist. In short, a work placement or internship represents an ideal opportunity to put theory into practice. Undergraduate respondents from both KAU/ Non-KAU, graduates and employers overwhelmingly welcomed this suggestion and identified a wide range of potential benefits that they thought could arise from undertaking work experience. However, Cronin's (2005: 259) observation that we should not forget that students are not "always and everywhere the same" is particularly applicable in the Saudi context. For example, as a result of the long-standing social barriers, cultural traditions, and conservative religious beliefs that have tended to limit women's participation in the public sphere in Saudi Arabia, female students may find it difficult to participate in such programmes. Although many changes were made during the reign of King Abdullah (2005-2015), gender segregation is still strictly enforced in the vast majority of Saudi workplaces. This segregation would certainly limit the opportunities available for women to participate in work placements or internships at private sector companies, where it is often not feasible in economic or practical terms to offer a female-only working space with adequate facilities (Hakem, 2017).

8.7 Conclusion

This discussion chapter has identified several key issues that will need to be addressed in the Saudi context in order to produce a new generation of

graduates who will have the necessary vocational skills or competences to enter the job market as professional translators and, in time, be capable of competing with their counterparts from across the MENA region. These issues were identified by analysing primary data from staff, student and graduate questionnaires and employer interviews; and triangulating these results with secondary data and insights from other researchers with expertise in the field of EFL/TS in Saudi HE. These other researchers have included Fatani (2009), AlKhamis (2012), Altuhaini (2015), Abu-Ghararah (2017), Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017), Alghamdi (2017), and Al-Jarf (2017). In addition, evidence from other documentary sources has been used to shed further light on these findings and support the conclusions that were reached. Frameworks of competences such as those devised by Kelly (2005) were also employed to help identify weaknesses in the current curricula of Saudi EFL/TS courses.

The improvements to the teaching and learning experience is one of the aims of Saudi Arabia's latest national transformation plan which will prove useful in helping the Kingdom to achieve a better alignment between "the outputs of higher education and the requirements of the job market" (Vision 2030, 2015:40)

Based on the above evidence, it is concluded that the translation programmes are failing to meet the current needs of the professional market in Saudi Arabia. These programmes do not provide their bachelor's degree graduates with the

appropriate vocational skills required to join the translating profession for the following reasons:

- A significant gap exists between current market needs and the type of texts and specific fields that students are given to work on.
- The academic qualifications, expertise, and experience of a large percentage of university EFL/TS staff are not aligned with the teaching responsibilities that they have been allocated.
- The current teacher-centred translator training methodologies are ineffective, with evidence that traditional pedagogical methods are producing graduates who lack other essential employability attributes such as analytical skills and the ability to reflect on practice.
- Stakeholders lack involvement in curriculum planning, monitoring, and review. Students, graduates who are practising translators, employers, and representatives of industry bodies all need to have a voice in contributing to these processes.
- A tendency to privilege theory over practice is evident, and in some cases, students receive little to no relevant practical training.
- Although translators are increasingly dependent on IT skills, translation technology, and research skills, these subjects are not given the prominence they are due in Saudi courses.
- The existing NCAAA (2015) system for quality assurance and accreditation within the HE sector is yet to be firmly embedded within many Saudi HE institutions.

- Many students lack a clear understanding of what translation as a profession entails.

Also noted was the fact that a number of the present shortcomings addressed appear to be long-standing issues of concern regarding the teaching of EFL/TS within the Saudi HE sector.

The concluding chapter of this thesis addresses these shortcomings and makes recommendations concerning changes that need to be made to existing teaching practices, curricula, and the student skill sets. Based on the findings of this thesis, these changes have the potential to improve the course design and teaching of translation in Saudi universities and thereby produce graduates with the necessary vocationally oriented profile to work in the translation sector.

9 Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings of this research by reviewing the research questions which have been addressed in this study. This review is followed by recommendations in terms of the changes that need to be made to existing teaching practices, curricula, and student skill sets in order to improve course design and teaching of translation in Saudi universities and thereby produce graduates with the necessary vocationally oriented profile to work in the translation sector. These recommendations are based on evidence gathered from a range of primary and secondary sources. The chapter also reflects briefly on recent changes that have taken place in Saudi Arabia and assesses the potential impact of these changes on the HE sector. The focus of the chapter then shifts to a discussion of the limitations of the study and suggests future directions for research in this field.

9.2 Review of Research Findings

This thesis aimed to address the following four research questions:

1. To what extent do the translation programmes at KAU and other Saudi universities teaching translation meet the current needs of the professional market in Saudi Arabia?
2. To what extent do these programmes provide their bachelor degree graduates with the vocational skills required to enter the translating profession?

3. What useful insights about best practice and innovative approaches in undergraduate translation programmes can be gained from reviewing academic literature and surveying course documentation in this field?
4. What changes need to be made to existing teaching practices, curricula, and student skill sets in order to improve the course design and teaching of translation in Saudi universities and thereby produce graduates with the necessary vocationally oriented profile?

To address the first research question, the initial intention of this thesis was to survey existing literature to determine the current needs of the translation market in Saudi Arabia. The results would then have been compared with the text types that feature in the current EFL/TS programmes in a sample of Saudi universities. However, for a range of reasons, the existing data did not allow for a systematic analysis of the types of translation undertaken within Saudi Arabia. As previous authors have established, analysing this aspect of the Saudi market poses numerous difficulties, particularly in terms of the lack of available data that can be considered reliable (Meiering, 2004; Al-Khatib, 2008; Fatani, 2009; Al-Khamis, 2012). Attempts to obtain information by surveying individuals who have direct experience of the Saudi market, whether as managers of translation agencies or as representatives who commission translations on behalf of large private publishers, has also proved unsuccessful. Publishers within this industry, when approached, have been unwilling to share information, citing concern that the information could be used by competitors. It is possible publishers may also fear that sharing this information will reveal the numbers of non-Saudi citizens that they employ (see Section 1.4.5). A further difficulty in attempting to answer

this question related to the predominantly individualistic, seemingly random nature of much translation in Saudi Arabia, where the industry is largely unregulated and continues to be heavily dependent on a foreign labour force (Fatani, 2009; Altuhaini, 2015; Abu-Ghararah, 2017).

Analyses conducted by Meiering (2004), Al-Khatib (2008), and Alkhamis (2012) were used to provide a useful indication of the type of work that private sector publishers are willing to commission in the Saudi market. Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) study, which used job descriptions to collect data on current market requirements, provided further insights into the Arabic–English translation industry within the MENA region on the whole. Based on evidence from the analysis of university course content and staff, student and graduate questionnaires as well as the employer interviews responses, significant misalignment exists between the type of material used in teaching of undergraduate students in Saudi universities and current market needs. The lack of emphasis on scientific/technical texts is of particular concern.

To address the second research question, it was necessary to initially review broader historical debates about the nature of translation from a variety of academic and industry perspectives to understand how these perspectives have influenced pedagogical thinking about whether the ability to translate is "caught or taught". The idea that translators can be trained is a relatively recent concept, and researchers have made various attempts to identify and categorise the competences that an individual requires to become a successful professional

translator. The literature review assessed a number of approaches that could be used to help translation coaches in Saudi HE institutions to identify these competences and evaluate the extent to which these competences are being developed by current teaching methods and reflected in curriculum content. These approaches included the models of PACTE (2003), Kelly (2005), Greere and Tătaru (2008), and Hurtado Albir and Anabel Galán-Mañas (2010) as well as the EMT competence framework (2017).

Analysis of the EFL/TS course from KAU, JU, as well as other Saudi university courses, together with the responses of staff, students, graduates as well as employers, has illustrated the extent to which these programmes provide the bachelor degree graduates with the vocational skills required to become members of the translating profession. This analysis was also supported by previous research on curriculum and translator training in Saudi Arabia and the findings of Al-Batineh and Bilali (2017).

The key finding in terms of vocational skills was that, although professional translators are increasingly dependent on IT skills, translation technology, and research skills, these competences are not given the prominence that they deserve in Saudi courses. Moreover, the general tendency to privilege theory over practice means that students receive little to no relevant practical training, which is key to development of vocational skills. The continuing use of traditional teacher-centred approaches in Saudi universities further discourages students

from developing other essential employability attributes, such as analytical skills and the ability to reflect on practice.

To address the third research question, the original intention was to conduct a detailed comparative analysis of the content of BA languages courses incorporating translation at selected UK universities and the content of Saudi EFL courses that offer translation components. However, it became apparent that a comparative analysis of this kind would not prove to be meaningful. Many socio-cultural and political differences exist between the two national contexts, and distinctive principles underpin the curricula in Saudi HE institutions.

A decision therefore was taken to think in more general terms about improving the teaching and learning experience as well as policies and practices. The analysis of the EFL/TS courses, its contents, objectives and obtaining views of the stakeholders regarding the strengths and weaknesses encountered, may be usefully incorporated into the analysis and improvement of the Saudi context (to respond to the first and second research questions) as well as into the recommendations developed to address the fourth research question. Particular attention was paid to concepts such as quality assurance and graduate employability. Those concepts are still relatively new in the Saudi context, both concepts will assume a much greater role within Saudi HE as a result of the latest national transformation plan, Saudi Vision 2030 (see Section 1.2.2).

The recommendations provided in the following section are based in part on a synthesis of evidence from relevant literature. Finally, they are grounded on the conclusions drawn in Chapter 8 regarding the deficiencies in the current teaching methods, curricula content, and student skill sets in Saudi HE institutions where translation is taught.

9.3 Recommendations

This section offers a series of recommendations intended to improve the course design and teaching of translation in EFL/TS courses at Saudi universities. These recommendations cover changes that need to be made to the existing teaching practices, the curricula, and the student skill sets to produce EFL /TS graduates with the vocationally oriented profile required to enter the translation profession. They also consider broader issues related to the teaching and learning experience that emerged during this research. However, before implementing any of these recommendations for the institutions, there might be a need for the approval of the policy makers whose directives set the parameters of what changes HEIs can make such as the ministry of higher education, NCAAA or other stakeholders.

9.3.1 Recommendations regarding teaching practices, curricula, and student skill sets

1. **Encourage adoption of student-centred learning.** Based on students' data analysis (see Section 6.7.2), the current teacher-centred translator training methodologies are ineffective and

students are dissatisfied. Considering the similarities between EFL and TS in the context of this teacher-centred learning, the present recommendation to encourage student-centred learning is applicable for EFL/TS in Saudi universities. Based on the students' questionnaire data analysis (see Section 6.7.3), assignments that solely test students' rote learning skills and ability to memorise do not prepare graduates for a career that requires competences such as analytical skills and the ability to reflect on practice. However, evidence suggests that this problem is long standing and deep rooted in Saudi Arabia, stemming from multiple causes (see Sections 1.2.3, 6.7.8, 6.7.9). Therefore, attempts to simply impose new teaching practices and forms of assessment are likely to meet with significant resistance from staff and students.[48] In the medium term, change will come as current educational reforms work their way through the system; the influx into HE of young Saudis exposed to other educational systems as a result of the King Abdullah Sponsorship Programme (see Section 1.2.1), for example, are likely to be more open to innovation. In the short term, government recognition of those individuals and institutions that are innovators in student-centred learning in the university sector is important. Using TED talks[49] or a dedicated YouTube channel may be an effective method of spreading innovation given the

[48] See Hamad Alnahdi's (2014) article on educational change in Saudi Arabia for an overview of the various models of educational reform that have been tried to date in Saudi Arabia and the reasons for their failure.

[49] See https://www.ted.com/about/our-organization for an explanation of this non-profit organisation dedicated to "Ideas worth spreading".

popularity of online media content in Saudi society. Increased stakeholder involvement in course accreditation processes and curriculum planning, monitoring, and review by graduates and employers are also likely to increase the pressure for change.

2. **Ensure that translation students have opportunities to participate in accredited placements or internship programmes.** There is a tendency to privilege theory over practice. In some cases, as shown in the data analysis (see Section 6.7.8), students receive little to no relevant practical training, while graduates agreed that internships strongly support students in their future careers (see Section 7.8). Offering students the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in a work-based environment (See Sections 9.4, Actions 3 and 4) would help students to develop both specific translation-related competences (such as translation technology and research skills) as well as other more generic employability skills. Ensuring that work-based learning is accredited would ensure integration in the degree programme. Alternatively, students should be provided with a separate certificate. Both methods would incentivise student participation in the scheme.

3. **Align text types chosen for translation practice more closely with needs of the Saudi market.** A significant gap exists between the type of texts and specific fields currently

featuring in EFL/TS course content and the current market needs (as discussed in Section 8.5.1). The use of more authentic texts and inclusion of more scientific/technical material would provide students with a more vocationally oriented learning experience. Where academic staff lack the expertise and experience to cope with this demand, workshops managed by practising translators or translation trainers may be used to substitute or supplement existing provision. Regular review of curriculum content, including input from industry stakeholders, would also aid in ensuring that materials taught in degree programmes continue to reflect market needs.

4. **Incorporate IT skills, translation technology, and research skills into course content as a matter of urgency.** It is clear from the discussion (see Section 8.6) that although professional translators are increasingly dependent on IT skills, translation technology, and research skills, these areas are currently not given the prominence that they are due in Saudi courses. Urgent attention must be afforded to re-designing the Computer Literacy module during the Foundation Year to ensure that students gain proficiency in practical IT skills and are able to use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. Learning how to use a basic search engine such as Google effectively should be incorporated into translation modules and linked to assignments to provide the required

incentive. As students progress through the course, they should be introduced to online dictionaries and terminology databanks (Al-Jarf, 2017). This introduction to materials should be linked meaningfully to assignments such as producing a field-specific list of terms in Arabic and English to ensure that students understand the usefulness of such terminology. Introductory workshops on CAT and MT led by translation practitioners or trainers with appropriate expertise may be provided to undergraduates. However, it may be more effective in the short term to leave incorporating these translation technologies fully into the curriculum until postgraduate level. This recommendation has resource implications. Furthermore, Saudi universities already face major pressures on space due to growing student numbers. Accordingly, a scheme that provides subsidised IT hardware and software for students to access resources from home may need to be implemented. This implementation would also help to ensure that female students have equal access to learning resources.

9.3.2 Other related recommendations

Several recommendations can also be made related to other aspects in Saudi HE institutions.

5. **Ensure that all staff engage in continuing professional development.** There is a mismatch between the academic qualifications, expertise, and experience of a large percentage of university EFL/TS staff and the teaching responsibilities that they are allocated as discussed in

section 5.1. This mismatch represents another long-standing area of concern in Saudi HE institutions and one which may need to be tackled on a number of fronts. University staff are currently subject to very little accountability in terms of teaching quality; this lack of accountability is likely to change, however, as part of broader reforms within the system and may lead to more compulsory training for HE teaching staff. The Saudi government may wish to follow a model of requiring all new staff appointments to take part in a professional development scheme; a body similar to the Higher Education Academy could be established to serve this purpose.

6. **Increase stakeholder involvement in curricula planning and ongoing monitoring and review of programmes.** There is currently a lack of stakeholder involvement in curricula planning and in the ongoing monitoring and review of programmes. In this context, stakeholders include not only staff but also students, graduates who are practising translators, employers of EFL graduates, and industry body representatives. All parties must have a voice in contributing their experiences, expertise, and/or knowledge of industry and societal needs to these processes. Although students are major stakeholders in the university community, they have little if any opportunity to give input regarding any aspect of curricula planning or course content; students need a representative voice to register their opinions concerning the quality of the education that they are receiving (see Sections 5.1, 5.2, 8.5.1).

7. **Ensure that the NCAAA system for quality assurance and accreditation is firmly embedded within Saudi HE institutions.**

   The Saudi government should investigate why the NCAAA (2015) system for quality assurance and accreditation is not yet operational within Saudi HE. Without a functioning framework to monitor, review, and evaluate the quality of the provisions in Saudi universities, the Kingdom's ambitions for a world-class HE system will not be realised. Rigorous systems of quality assurance and accreditation play a crucial role in ensuring that academic programmes are fit for their purpose and able to guarantee that the outcomes of Saudi HE institutions are in line with market needs (Saudi Vision 2030). Consideration may need to be given to imposing financial penalties or other punitive measures on institutions that fail to demonstrate commitment to implementing the NCAAA framework, as such failures threaten to harm the reputation of the national HE system as a whole.

8. **Provide career guidance and support for students and graduates of translation programmes.** Many students of EFL/TS courses appear to lack a clear understanding of what translation as a profession entails and/or have unrealistic expectations of their preparedness to enter the profession (see Section 8.4.1). Rather than attempting to address this issue in course content, establishing a career guidance service within the university may be more effective. Career guidance services could be supported by extracurricular activities led by graduates from the course

and could introduce students to different aspects of the profession. In addition, consideration should be given to electronic resources offering further information on pathways into translation as a career (such as the UK initiative National Network for Translation),[50] links to translation job portals, and appropriate professional networking social media platforms (see Section 9.4). These resources should also be made available to graduate students.

Given that many women are likely to work as freelancers from home for practical reasons, enterprise units may offer individuals support to set up and run their own businesses.[51] This support would also align with the Saudi Vision 2030 objective to expand entrepreneurship and enterprise opportunities.

9.4 Concrete Actions for Saudi HEIs

Based on the recommendations given above, Saudi HEIs could take several concrete actions towards achieving better-quality EFL/TS programmes that support the desired outcome. Some of the following actions should be prioritised and taken immediately in both EFL/TS courses with other actions following accordingly.

[50] http://www.nationalnetworkfortranslation.ac.uk/resources/.
is no longer being updated following the end of government funding for the *Routes into Languages* project, but still provides some idea of the form that a resource of this kind might take.
[51] See the range of activities and support offered by the University of Wolverhampton's Enterprise Department at https://www.wlv.ac.uk/current-students/careers-enterprise-and-the-workplace/.

Action 1: Hold annual review meetings with professionals.

These meetings should be conducted before the beginning of each academic year and should involve all stakeholders: student representatives, graduates willing to return to share their opinions, members of staff in the translation department, and employers offering jobs for translators. Consultation with professional stakeholders should play a significant role in the curriculum planning; the discussion should include possible curriculum changes for improvement, students' inputs and outputs, ways to update the list of workshops and seminars, and any new needs or trending issues related to boosting employability rates.

This annual review will also ensure that the NCAAA system for quality assurance remains firmly embedded within the educational system (see Section 8.3). The academic programme will thus be ensured as fit for its purposes and capable of guaranteeing outcomes that are in line with the market needs. This annual review will also help the university better anticipate and implement necessary changes and improvements.

Action 2: Add specialised modules to fulfil employability aims.

The annual reviews will also help in producing a concrete action plan for immediately including extra modules, such as research skills and computer

modules, in the foundation year. It will help the university decide on the most appropriate modules and text types to incorporate into the Saudi EFL/TS curriculum. According to the findings (Section 8.5), the importance of religious and literary translation has likely been overestimated by the EFL/TS lecturers. At the same time, the need for scientific/technical modules and text types has been significantly underestimated. Therefore, a curriculum needs to be developed that includes the latter subjects as well as modules related to business management, marketing, and computer assisted translation tools (CAT) as these are important aspects in the professional world.

Action 3: Stop privileging theory over practice.

First, to avoid the teacher-centred approach and regular lectures, HEIs can implement compulsory talks, workshops, and seminars during every semester, and students can be assessed on tasks they do after attendance as part of their course. These events can feature guest speakers such as graduates who have just started their careers as translators, employers, experienced professional translators, and lecturers from other departments or other national/international universities (see Section 8.2).

Second, HEIs can form or empower a similar initiative to the one produced by the Saudi Ministry of Culture, namely the Literature, Translation, and Publishing Commission (see Section 2.6). Such initiatives can engage individuals, institutions, and companies. The Commission, for example, will host elite Saudi

and international intellectuals to discuss various cultural and academic issues. Such exchanges would prove useful for students and graduates by giving them a better idea of the field and what is expected from them as employees.

Third, HEIs could implement practical training more often throughout the year. Students should not have practical training only in their final year; practical training should be implemented in earlier stages too. This could be accomplished in many ways.

Work-shadowing, for example, could offer students a glimpse early on into the reality of the career, including its nature, environment, and requirements. This idea was mentioned by the students surveyed (Section 6.6), who argued work shadowing would provide practical skills and familiarise students with the environment, allowing them to observe real professionals and how those professionals deal with real-world work challenges.

Work-shadowing could be introduced from the second and/or third year after students have one year of theoretical modules behind them. Students could take an entire work-based module for a whole semester or just perform work-shadowing for a few hours a week as one part of a module. They could work in different environments to gain a clear picture of the field and a bird's eye view of the job market and its requirements. Work-shadowing could thus help students in choosing what area in the field they are interested in, which could guide what

modules they choose. It will also help them in developing the generic employability skills as well as the translation, analytical skills and the ability to reflect on practice. A proposed curriculum for Saudi universities that includes the practical based modules is suggested in the appendices (see Appendix 12).

Action 4: Establish a student-based translation agency service within the university.

Via a student-based internal translation agency, students could volunteer and work during their free time in order to learn applicable skills, perhaps working alongside final-year students who have expertise. Projects could be assigned from within the university, such as translating documents or books from other departments, or projects could be drawn from outside resources. Participating students could receive certificates that state the number of working hours they completed, and those certificates could be respected as part of a practical module within their course. Ideally, they could work internally in this centre or in a different field of their preference.

Action 5: Establish a professional body for translators and launch an online national translation network for students and graduates.

Establishing a professional body for translators is an important and critical step. This professional body should offer a database for all translators that includes their fees and expertise, protects their rights, and keeps records of graduates. Details in this database should include translators' employability rates, job

vacancies, and market changes and needs. These issues in particular are considered to be a limitation of this research, which struggled to collect market data due to the lack of regulation of any translation activity (see Section 8.5.1) This database would serve as a reference to all professionals and to HEIs when planning translation programmes.

Moreover, establishing a professional body similar to the Higher Education Academy could be helpful in ensuring all new staff appointments take part within a professional development scheme. This body could offer courses through either a national/international university, a commission, or any other professional body that are delivered face-to-face or online in order to ensure access. It could enable staff to increase their awareness of both the theoretical and practical elements of translation, which would in turn benefit current students at Saudi universities with improved teaching practices.

A national translation network initiative could also provide students and graduates with career guidance, links to job portals, links to useful international workshops and seminars, and appropriate social media platforms. Experienced graduates, trainers, and professionals could provide support and career guidance for students and enlighten them about what the translation profession entails. It could help them with networking opportunities and peer support as well. Such an initiative could intensify collaborations with language vendors and open up research possibilities to support knowledge about what can boost employability and have a positive impact on society.

9.5 The Promise of Change

Saudi Vision 2030, the national development plan launched by the Saudi government in April 2016, outlines the principal plans for the Kingdom's economic and development goals for the next fifteen years. The plan places particular emphasis on aligning the outcomes of the Saudi higher education system with market needs – what it refers to as "learning for working" – and on "investing in education and training so that our young men and women are equipped for the jobs of the future" (Saudi Vision 2030*,* 2016: 36). Saudi Vision 2030 also sets targets related to women's participation rates in the labour force, which is a new development in the country. It is hoped that this strategy document will be backed up by the necessary investment, policies, and action to ensure that long-promised changes within the Saudi HE system will materialise, and that all young Saudi students will be given a voice in shaping the nature of the teaching and learning experience.

In a milestone step, in June 2020, Saudi Arabia proposed a new university system that marks a transformative and historical change for higher education in the country. This new system aims to promote greater university independence starting with three universities: KSU, KAU, and IAU. This change will support the finding in the present research that universities should shape their specialisations and programmes according to development needs and job opportunities in the

regions they serve. This system will encourage the universities to work on their programmes to fulfil the needs of the students and the market.

Moreover, the aforementioned new initiative by the Ministry of Culture in Saudi Arabia, namely the Literature, Translation, and Publishing Commission, will have a great impact on bridging the gap between what is taught and what is needed in the market and will further support the research in this field (see Section 2.6).

9.6 Limitations of the Research

The limitations of this research acknowledge the following:

1- Constraints of time and practical difficulties meant that at the beginning, it was not possible to conduct interviews with members of university staff as planned. These interviews would have provided a useful supplement to questionnaire responses and the opportunity to obtain more detailed information on aspects of course content. However, in the next phase of my research, per the advice of my supervisor and examiner, seven interviews with local employers were therefore conducted (see Section 7.10).

2- The study is not necessarily representative of the entire Saudi population of those teaching and studying EFL in terms of gender since the vast majority of those who took part were female students. However, given

that the university sector in Saudi Arabia is gender-segregated and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future, the sample provided useful insight into the opinions and experiences of a group that have traditionally had a limited participation rate in the labour market but are now being encouraged to take up employment. Because only five KAU staff with a similar experience profile chose to participate in the study, the representativeness of their opinions is questionable.

3- The lack of figures from the Saudi translation and publishing industry for the reasons explained above (see Section 9.2) was disappointing, as these figures would have assisted greatly in assessing the competences necessary. However, secondary data and insights from other researchers with expertise in the field of translator training aided in bridging this gap. Collecting additional data from graduates and employers also helped to address this limitation as discussed in Chapter 7.

4- The staff and student questionnaire would have benefitted from having fewer and more targeted questions to facilitate analysis. Though confusion did not seem to arise among respondents, the questionnaire should also have included a definition of some of the terms used to ensure that respondents understood exactly what was meant. This issue was avoided in the second phase of graduate data collection. Furthermore, grouping together responses under the "non-KAU" university

headings presented problems in terms of interpreting answers. However, this method was thought to offer the only feasible way to deal with the small numbers of responses from a wide range of institutions, none of which would have been statistically viable in their own right. Where necessary, attention was drawn to what appeared to be marked differences across institutions.

5- Numbers were minimal in terms of staff, student and graduate responses in some universities; therefore, representativeness in terms of the percentage of a class or the total number of universities is compromised to some extent (see Section 3.8.1). Because robustness of the conclusions of the findings might be affected directly by the low number of respondents in some institutions, these conclusions could possibly vary if more responses had been received. However, because of the questionnaire distributed online and the lack of control on the number of responses from each institution; the outbreak of COVID-19 (in the second phase of my research), this limitation could not be overcome.

6- All the participants of the study are linked to translation either as teachers; students or graduates of EFL/TS courses. The seven employers in Saudi were selected based on their experience with employing EFL/TS graduates. Although each employer represents a different field, they provided relevant views on the actual market needs that align with the results obtained from a previous study and their views have validated the

research findings. However, conducting more employer interviews in those fields will lead to more robust research conclusion.

9.7 Suggestions for Further Research

Al-Batinah and Bilali's (2017) innovative approach to gathering data on market needs for translator competences and field-specific expertise by examining job descriptions offers useful methods for obtaining further insights into the Arabic–English translation industry. The approach also suggests a possible alternative to address the difficulties that I experienced myself when attempting to gather data from those in the Saudi translation and publishing industry. It may be a useful next step to attempt to replicate Al-Batineh and Bilali's (2017) study, but by focusing solely on the Saudi context with the aim of identifying major differences between the market needs in the Gulf State and those of its MENA neighbours, while increasing the number of respondents, being a limitation in this research, to improve the data representativeness and increase the robustness of the research findings and conclusions.

It might also be interesting to compare the findings of this research with data collected about UK universities' policies and practices. This comparison could be accomplished via an in-depth review aimed at identifying what criteria are used in comparative critical assessments of core aspects of provision in current undergraduate translation courses at some selected Saudi and UK universities.

Another area that merits further attention is the role that placements and internships play in developing student competences and evaluating which, if any, other skills and attitudes may be acquired by those who elect to participate in a programme of this kind. It would also be useful to determine which barriers may be faced by female Saudi students wishing to participate in placements and internships and to explore ways of eliminating or minimising these obstacles.

9.8 Concluding Remarks

Reflecting on the research process, Canadian academic David C. Logan recalls Donald Rumsfeld making the following statement in 2002:

> There are known knowns. There are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we now know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we do not know we don't know.

Logan notes that Rumsfeld's observation formed as an accurate categorisation of the general understanding of a researcher's field of enquiry.

When I began this research, my personal experiences in Saudi HE made me confident that I knew exactly what problems EFL departments faced in relation to preparing undergraduates for careers as professional translators. I was probably also sure that I knew quick and successful solutions. However, as I

began to explore the area of translation studies and translator training, I realised that, in fact, there was a great deal that I had incorrectly assumed that I knew. Learning more about higher education system in Saudi Arabia, for example, by analysing course content and objectives, practice and policy, and concepts such as employability, generic skills, stakeholders, and quality assurance, combined with my own personal experience of that system, has been crucial in helping me to reflect anew on the Saudi system and about the "things we know that we know". This process of learning from other education system also encouraged me to rethink how to approach this research, as I realised my lack of knowledge. Reading other researchers' studies and consulting documentation from various sources helped me to identify an initial series of "known unknowns" and to produce a research agenda that would help me to shed light on those "things that we now know we didn't know".

A number of unknown unknowns still remain. These are questions which are now waiting for someone else to ask them and, in the process of answering them, contribute to the endless task of discovery known as research.

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11 Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Approval Confirmation Letter

Faculty of Arts: Ethics Committee
George Wallis Building
Wulfruna Street
Wolverhampton
WV1 1DT
Date 09/05/2018

Ethics Approval Application Number. 107161

Researcher. Sara Mohammed Almugharbil

Level of Research. Postgraduate

Title of Research. PRODUCING THE TRANSLATORS OF TOMORROW: DESIGNING A STUDENT-CENTRED AND COMPETENCE-BASED TRANSLATION CURRICULUM FOR SAUDI UNIVERSITIES

Decision. Approved

Dear Sara,

The Faculty of Arts Ethics Committee has agreed that you have adequately addressed the concerns raised and can grant you ethical approval for the above named research project.

If you make any substantial changes to your research, you will have to complete a new request for ethical approval. This letter only relates to ethical issues and has no bearing on other aspects of your research, such as methodology and theoretical framework.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Faculty Ethics Committee if you have any questions

Dr Stephen Jacobs

Chair of the Faculty of Arts Ethics Committee
MK507, George Wallis Building
[E-mail address redacted]

Appendix 2: Letter #1 Granting Permission to Conduct Research at KAU

Image redacted due to confidentiality considerations

Appendix 3: Letter #2 Granting Permission to Conduct Research at KAU

Image redacted due to confidentiality considerations

Appendix 4: Letter Requesting Permission to Conduct Study in Saudi Universities

11.08.2017.

To whom it may concern,

Sara Almugharbil is a PhD student at the University of Wolverhampton. As an agreed part of her study plan she is required to conduct a study in Saudi Arabia, collecting data for her research project by interviewing a group of university lecturers, who teach translation studies at KAU.

As Ms Almugharbil's Director of Studies and supervisor, I request your permission for her to access the required information and conduct her research in order to identify gaps in the provision of translation studies, and develop a plan for improvements in design and delivery of appropriate courses. Her research trip is planned for late October 2017 and will last until end of December 2017.

Kind regards,

Irina Moore (Dr.) *Irina Moore*

Senior Fellow of Higher Education Academy

Senior Lecturer in Linguistics University of Wolverhampton

UK

Tel. [redacted]

Email: [redacted]

Appendix 5: Letter of Consent Accompanying Questionnaire

Translation Modules Questionnaire

My name is Sara Almugharbil. I am a PhD researcher in the field of translation training at the University of Wolverhampton, UK. Your cooperation is highly appreciated in answering this questionnaire as fully as possible. The research title is 'Producing the Translators of Tomorrow: Designing a Student-centred and Competence-based Translation Curriculum for King Abdulaziz University'. The questionnaire is targeting members of staff who have taught and/or currently are teaching translation courses at Saudi Universities (KAU, KSU, PNU, Jeddah University, Al-imam University). The questionnaire aims at acquiring participants' opinions and feedback on the current provision.

The questionnaire consists of three parts:
1- Qualifications and experience
2- The translation programme in the department
3- Methods of teaching and assessments

Completing the questionnaire will take about 15-20 minutes of your time. Please be assured that any information given will remain confidential and anonymous, will not be shared, and will only be used for this research's purposes.
You are under no obligation to reply to this questionnaire. If you do choose to participate, your continued participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time.

Thank you very much for your time.

I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes of this research study. I understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions:

Sara Mohammed Almugharbil
[Telephone number redacted]
[E-mail address redacted]

Appendix 6: Students' Questionnaire: English Translation

1. <u>Personal Information</u>

1. Name, email (optional):
2. Age:
3. University:
4. Reasons for choosing the course (English course in general)

   .....

5. Are you thinking of becoming a translator after graduation?
   a- Yes ☐
   b- No ☐
   c- Not sure ☐
6. What were your expectations about the translation module at the beginning of the course?
7. What did you expect to learn in it?

   .....

<u>Translation Module Assessment:</u>

<u>For KAU respondents only</u>

8. Were the module's objectives clear from the beginning of the course?
   a- Yes ☐
   b- No ☐
   c- Not sure ☐

<u>For non-KAU respondents only</u>

9. In your opinion, should any translation modules be added to the translation course?

   .....
   .....
   Please give reasons:
   .....
   .....

<u>For KAU respondents only</u>

10. In your opinion, which other elements should the module include in order to fulfil the needs of the job market and of students?
11. How would you rate the following elements of your translation modules? TICK THE BOX WHICH CORRESPONDS TO YOUR OPINION.

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very Poor	Not relevant
Library resources						
Methods of teaching						
Assignments given						
Relevance of module objectives to content						

Relevance of texts chosen for translation						
Final output						
Preparation for work as professional translator						
Practical application of translation theories taught						
Technological skills acquired in translation (e.g., dealing with electronic apps or software while translating)						

12. Practically, do you think the content of current modules will qualify you to be a professional translator?

a- Yes	
b- No	
c- Not sure	

Please give reasons:

……
…

13. In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses in the translation elements of your course?

……

2. Future plans:

14. Are you considering doing a Masters degree in translation?

a- Yes	
b- No	
c- Not sure	

15. If so, in which country?

.....
.....

16. In what field do you intend to work?

.....
.....

17. In your opinion, what skills are needed to work as a professional translator?

.....
.....

18. In your opinion, how can the course improved?

.....
.....

19. Does the course include practical training hours? Or workshops in translation?

a- Yes
b- No
c- Not sure

20. Do you think it is beneficial to include a practical training (internship) module for students who are interested in becoming translators?
    a- Yes
    b- No
    c- Not sure

Please give reasons:
……

21. Do you think it is more convenient for students to choose the translation module content (in advance) due to their needs and their future career?
    a- Yes
    b- No
    c- Not sure

Please give reasons:
……

Do you have any suggestions regarding the translation modules or the course in general?
……

Appendix 7: Student questionnaire: Arabic original

<u>إستبيان الطالبات باللغه العربيه</u>

<u>معلومات شخصيه</u>

١- البريد الالكتروني (اختياري):
٢- العمر:
-٣
الجامعه:

4- أسباب اختيارك لتخصص اللغه الانجليزيه:
.....
.....
.....
.....

٥- بعد التخرج، هل تفكرين في العمل كمترجمه؟
أ- نعم
ب- لا
ج- لست متأكده

٦- قبل التحاقك بالبرنامج الدراسي، ماذا كانت توقعاتك عن التالي:
أ. مادة الترجمه بشكل عام ؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

٧- عن محتوى الماده و ماستتعملينه خلال دراستك لها

.....
.....
.....
.....

<u>تقسيم مادة الترجمه</u>

٨- هل تم توضيح أهداف الماده من بداية البرنامج؟
أ- نعم
ب- لا
ج- لست متأكده

٩- (استبيان جامعة الملك عبدالعزيز) خلال البرنامج الحالي يتم تدريس ماده واحده للترجمه. في رأيك هل يجب إضافة مواد أخرى في تخصص الترجمه؟
أ- نعم

ب
-
لا

ج- لست متأكده

٩- (استبيان الجامعات الأخرى) في رأيك، كم عدد مواد الترجمه التي يجب أن يتضمنها برنامج اللغه الانقليزيه؟ فضلا مع ذكر الأسباب
.....
.....
.....

١٠- في اعتقادك، ماهو المحتوى المناسب لمواد الترجمه التي يجب إضافتها لتتماشى مع احتياجات الطلاب و سوق العمل؟
.....
.....
.....
.....

١١- أرجو تقييم الآتي بما يخص مادة الترجمه تحديدا، عن طرق وضع علامة (*) أمام المناسب

	لا أستطيع التحديد	ضعيف جدا	ضعيف	مقبول	جيد	جيد جدا
مصادر البحث العلميه للماده في مكتبه الكليه						
طرق تدريس مادة الترجمه						
الواجبات المعطاه						
ملائمة أهداف الماده للمحتوى						
مدى ملائمة النصوص المختاره في الترجمه						
المخرجات (النتائج) النهائيه للماده						
تجهيزالطالبات لسوق العمل في مجال الترجمه						
التطبيق العملي لنظريات الترجمه التي تم دراستها						
مهارات الترجمه الفوريه التي تم اكتسابها						

المهارات التقنية في الترجمه كالتعامل مع تطبيقات أو برامج إلكترونيه في الترجمه						

١٢ - بخصوص التطبيق العملي، هل تظنين أن الماده الحاليه تؤهلك للعمل كمترجمه إحترافيه ؟
أ- نعم

ب - لا

ج- لست متأكده
أرجو ذكر الأسباب
.....
.....
.....

١٣- برأيك ، ماهي أبرز نقاط القوه و الضعف في مادة الترجمه حاليا؟

.....
.....
.....
.....

<u>الخطط المستقبليه</u>

١٤- هل فكرتي في إكمال الدراسات العليا (تخصص الترجمه)؟
أ- نعم

ب - لا

ج- لست متأكده

١٥- لو كانت الإجابه نعم، في أي دوله؟
.....
.....
.....

١٦- بعد التخرج، في أي من المجالات تفضلين العمل؟ مع ذكر الأسباب!
.....
.....
.....
.....

١٧- في اعتقادك، ماهي المهارات التي يجب أن يكتسبها المترجم المحترف؟
.....
.....
.....
.....
١٨- في رأيك، كيف يتم تطوير أو تحسين المحتوى الحالي لمادة الترجمه ؟
.....
.....
.....
.....
١٩- في رأيك، هل هناك فائدة في إضافة مادة التدريب العملي للبرنامج المستقبلي (للمهتمات بالعمل كمترجمات بعد التخرج)!
أ- نعم
ب- لا
ج- لست متأكده
فضلا مع ذكر الأسباب
.....
.....
.....
.....

٢٠- هل تعتقدين أنه من الأفضل أن يتم اختيار محتوى مادة الترجمه بشكل مسبق من قبل الطالبه بما يتماشى مع رغباتها الوظيفيه و تطلعاتها المستقبليه؟
أ- نعم
ب- لا
ج- لست متأكده
فضلا مع ذكر الأسباب
.....
.....
.....
.....

٢١- هل هناك أي إقتراحات أو تعليقات إضافيه متعلقه بمادة الترجمه؟
.....
.....
.....

Appendix 8: Staff Questionnaire

A. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1. Where do you work?

……

2. Please state your current qualifications.

DEGREE	✓	AWARDING INSTITUTION
BA		
MA		
PhD		
Other professional qualifications		

If you have any other professional qualifications, please specify:
……
Please state your specialisation (general and specific major)

3. How many years' experience do you have of teaching English? Please tick one of the boxes below:

a.	1-5 years	
b.	6-10 years	
c.	11-15 years	
d.	16-20 years	
e.	Over 20 years	

4. Would you describe yourself as a specialist in translation? Please tick one of the boxes below:

a.	Yes	
b.	No	
c.	Unsure	

5. Please provide the following information for the translation modules you have taught.

Module title	When?	How long did you teach this module for?	Number of hours (for the whole module)?

THE TRANSLATION COURSE IN THE DEPARTMENT

6. When is translation introduced in the course?

LEVEL							
1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th

7. What do you think of this timing?

a. Too early
b. The right time
c. Too late
d. Unsure

8. In your opinion, are the objectives of the module made clear to the students from the outset?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Unsure

9. If 'yes', how are the objectives provided to students?

.....
.....
.....

10. In your opinion, are the course aims/objectives made clear to the teachers delivering the modules?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Unsure

11. Does the admission test for the department specifically test students' translation skills?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Unsure

12. Are there admission criteria for students who apply for the translation programme?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Unsure.

If 'yes' can you please provide further details on the admission criteria applied?

.....

13. In your opinion, to what extent do the current translation modules fulfil the programme learning outcomes?

It fulfils all the academic purposes.	It fulfils some of the academic purposes.	Unsure.	It fulfils very few of the academic purposes.	It doesn't fulfil any of the academic purposes.

14. In your opinion, to what extent does it prepare graduates for a career as a translator?

It prepares them for all aspects of this career.	It prepares them for some aspects of this career.	Unsure.	It prepares them for very few aspects of this career.	It does not prepare them for any aspects of this career.

TRANSLATION MODULES

15. How is the module content chosen?

a. The tutor of the module decides (personal choice). ☐
b. It is discussed by the tutors of the module and approved by the department. ☐
c. A committee decides in light of NCAAA standards. ☐
d. Another method* ☐

*If you ticked box, please provide further details:

.....
.....

16. How would you evaluate the amount of time (NUMBER OF HOURS) allocated on the course to teaching translation modules, bearing in mind the objectives of the programme?

a. Too much time ☐
b. About the right amount of time ☐
c. Too little time ☐
d. Unsure ☐

17. How would you evaluate the NUMBER OF TRANSLATION MODULES taught on the course, bearing in mind the objectives of the programme?

a. Too many modules ☐
b. About the right number of modules ☐
c. Too few modules ☐
d. Unsure ☐

18. What translation modules would **you suggest** (apart from 'Introduction to Translation') to be included in the programme in order to meet the following:
A- course objectives
B- student needs
C- job market demands
.....
.....
.....
.....

19. How important is it for students planning to work as translators to have experience dealing with the following text types (in order to meet the job market needs)?

Type of Text	Essential	Quite useful	Of limited use	Of no use	Unsure
Religious					
Scientific					
Literary					
Legal					
Media					
Commercial					

20. Are you aware of the translation course content of other Saudi universities offering translation programmes?

a. Yes ☐
b. No ☐
c. I do not know ☐

21. Are you aware of the course content of other non-Saudi universities offering translation?

a. Yes ☐
b. No ☐
c. I do not know ☐

Which universities? (Saudi or non-Saudi)
.....

22. Student input should contribute to the content of the translation course.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Methods of Teaching and Assessment in Translation Modules:

23. I am satisfied with the current methods of teaching translation in the department.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

24. Why are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the current methods?

.....
.....

25. What methods of teaching translation do you currently use in the classroom? (workshops, discussions, group work, etc.)

.....
.....

26. Is there a regular evaluation of the effectiveness and suitability of the teaching methods used in translation classes by the department in relation to the module's objectives?

a. Yes ☐
b. No ☐
c. I do not know ☐

If yes, what evaluation methods are used?

.....
.....

27. How do these evaluation methods help to achieve the learning outcomes and improve the students' skills?

.....
.....

28. Are there any offered opportunities (for members of staff) for professional training on translation?

a. Yes ☐
b. No ☐
c. Unsure ☐

Please provide further details on the professional training offered on translation.

.....
.....

29. How do you keep updated on the developments in teaching and learning in translation studies?

a. Library resources	
b. Attending conferences	
c. Reading Journals	
d. Online resources	
e. *Other	

*If 'other' Please specify.....

30. With regard to L1-L2 translation competence, how would you rate student proficiency after completing the translation programme?

Excellent	
Good	
Average	
Poor	
Very poor	

If you answered 'poor' or 'very poor', what types of weaknesses do you think the students exhibit?

.....
.....

31. Does the department arrange any internships or training for students interested in translation as a career?

a. Yes	
b. No	
c. I do not know.	

If yes, what form does the training take?

.....
.....

32. Graduates of this programme are ready to start a career in translation.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

33. Do you have any suggestions for…

a. improving the programme?

.....

b. improving student output?

.....

Your cooperation has been highly appreciated. Thank you.

Appendix 9 : Graduate Students' Questionnaire:

I- <u>Personal Information (optional)</u>

1)Email: ……..

2)Which university did you graduate from?……

3)What course (lane) did you study?

Translation?
Linguistics?
Literature?
General? (a course that includes all three above)
……

4)Why did you choose it? Was it related to your career aspirations?

……

5)Are you employed?

a- Yes
b- No

5.1- If yes, in what field?

……

5.2- Does your job involve elements of translation and interpreting?

a- Yes
b- No

5.3- If yes, to what extent?

a- Occasional
b- Regular

5.4 - How many hours or percentage?

……

5.5 – Is it part of the work contract?

- Yes
- No
- I am not sure

5.6- If no, would you consider a fulltime career in translation?

a- Yes
b- No
c- I am not sure

5.7- And why?

II- <u>Translation Module Assessment:</u>

6. - What were your expectations about the translation module at the beginning of the course?

- **What will you learn on it?**

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

7. How do you rate the following elements of your translation module?

TICK THE BOX WHICH CORRESPONDS TO YOUR OPINION.

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very Poor	Not relevant
Library resources						
Methods of Teaching						
Assignments						
Feedback given						
Texts relevance						
Module objectives						
Final output						
Professional preparation to start a job						
Translation theories?						
Interpreting?						
Translation Technology?						

8. What other elements do you think the module must include?

.....
.....
.....
.....
...

9. In your opinion, what are the skills needed to work as a professional translator?

.....
.....
.....

10. In your opinion, how can the course be improved?

.....
.....
.....

11. Do you think it is beneficial to include a practical training (internship) placement for students who are interested to work as translators?

a- Yes ☐
b- No ☐
c- I am not sure ☐

12. Why?

Appendix 10: Employers Interview

Employers/ Non- academic translation centres in Saudi Arabia

1- **What languages are required in your company?**

2- **Do you use services of translation and interpreting?**
   a- Regularly
   b- Occasionally
   c- Never

3- **How are the jobs advertised?**
a- a word of mouth
b- On a website
c- A notice on the window
d- A contract with a university
e- Social media platforms
f- Hiring after training course.
g- Other (please specify).....

4- **Have you ever employed graduates from Saudi Universities?**

   a- Yes
   b- No

   4.1- If yes, How many of them (approximately)?

   4.2 - How often? Or when was the last time you employed any of them?

   4.3 - Why would you hire them?

   4.4- In what areas?

   4.5- What are the aims, purposes and expectations in employing them?

   4.6 How do you find the translators efficiency?

5- Do they form as permanent part of your work force? Or do you hire them on occasional basis? **Why**?

6- What criteria are used for selecting potential translators?

7- Do you have a minimum required experience?
   a- Translation specific qualifications
   b- Experience, ability to speak a foreign language (no qualifications and experience in translation)
   c- No experience, ability to speak a foreign language (with a qualification)

8- What type of qualification is required?
   a- Languages degree
   b- Languages and translation degree
   c- Translation degree
   d- None of the above, just the ability to speak foreign languages

9- Does the pay rate depend on the qualifications and experience?
a- Yes
b- No

10- If yes, in what way? (for example, if the salary becomes higher, how much higher?)

11- Is interpreting part of the services required?
   a- Yes
   b- No

12- If yes, is there a difference in pay rate for translation and interpreting jobs?

13- If so, how do you rate the translators' efficiency in terms of the following (in the scale of 1 to 5)

	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
a. Translators' efficiency (in general) and translation performance					

b. Applying their previous educational skills and knowledge to their Jobs					
c. Cooperation and teamwork skills					
d. Productivity and proposing ideas					
e. Their commitment to their jobs and time management					
f. Ability to deal with new technologies and soft wares					

14- Could you identify the strengths and weaknesses in their translation performance?

a- …….

b- ……

15- Suggestions for improving their performance

Appendix 11: Outlines of Saudi University Course Structures

AL Imam University College of Languages & Translation
Department of English Language & Literature: BA Study Plan

Course Title	*Course Code*	*Cr. hrs*	*Pre-requisite*
LEVEL ONE			
Applied Arabic Editing	Lit103	1	
Principles of Islamic Education	Edu100	2	
Intro to Computers		2	
Theology	Crd131	2	
The Holy Qur'an	Qur101	1	
Interpretation of the Qur'an	QUR104	2	
Listening and Speaking	ENG 100	3	
Reading & Comprehension 1	ENG 103	3	
English Grammar 1	ENG 118	3	
Applied Arabic Grammar	Syx101	2	
Writing 1	ENG 111	3	
LEVEL TWO			
Principles of Islamic Education	Edu150	2	
Hadith	SUN104	2	
Fiqh	Fiqh150	2	
The Holy Qur'an2	Qur151	1	
Listening and Speaking	ENG 102	3	ENG 100
Reading & Comprehension 2	ENG 104	3	ENG 103
Writing 2	ENG 112	3	ENG 111
English Grammar 1	ENG 119	3	ENG 118

Arabic Grammar	Syx102	2	
Arabic Drills	Syx128	2	

LEVEL THREE

History and Policy of Education in KSA	Edu201	2	
Biography of the Prophet	Hist220	2	
Theology	Crd132	2	
Fiqh	Fiqh200	2	
The Holy Qur'an3	Qur201	1	
Introduction to English Literature	ENG 207	3	ENG102,104,112,119
Essay Writing	ENG 211	2	ENG 112
Grammar 3	ENG 220	2	ENG 119
Introduction to Translation	ENG 225	2	ENG119,112,104,102
Introduction to Linguistics	ENG 229	4	ENG119,112,104,102
Research Methods	ENG 233	2	ENG119,112,104,102

LEVEL FOUR

Reformative Da'wah in Arabia	DAW125	2	
The Holy Qur'an4	Qur251	1	
Novel	ENG 209	2	ENG 207
Poetry	ENG 212	2	ENG 207
Essay Writing	ENG 214	2	ENG 211
Translation	ENG 226	3	ENG 225
Syntax	ENG 237	3	ENG 229

Phonetics	ENG 239	3	ENG 229
Drama	ENG 244	2	ENG 207
Foreign Language (French)	ENG 274	3	

LEVEL FIVE

Principles of Curricula	Edu306	2	
History of KSA	Hist309	2	
The Holy Qur'an5	Qur301	1	
Novel	ENG 310		ENG 209
Poetry	ENG 313		ENG 212
Essay Writing	ENG 315		ENG 214
Translation	ENG 327		ENG 226
Drama	ENG 345		ENG 244
Semantics	ENG 363		ENG 229
History of English Literature	ENG 370		ENG 207
Foreign Language (French)	ENG 374		ENG 274

LEVEL SIX

The Holy Qur'an 6	Qur351	1	
Essay Writing	ENG 316	2	ENG315
Theories of Language	ENG 368	2	ENG229-239
Translation	ENG 328	4	ENG327
Novel	ENG 311	2	ENG310
Literary Criticism	ENG 364	2	ENG313,345,310
Poetry	ENG 314	2	ENG 313
Drama	ENG 346	2	ENG 345
Teaching Policies & School Management	EDU 354	2	

TEFL Methods	EDU 160	2	ENG 229
Educational Psychology	Psy 301		

LEVEL SEVEN

Literary Criticism	ENG 465	2	ENG 364
Research	ENG 434	2	ENG 233
TEFL	EDU 260	2	EDU 160
CALL	EDU 261	2	ENG 229
Educational Evaluation & Assessment		2	
History of English	ENG 424	2	ENG 229
Language and Society	ENG 466	2	ENG 229
Translation	ENG 429	4	ENG 328
Novel	ENG 412	2	ENG 311
Islamic Culture	Cul402	2	
The Holy Qur'an7	Qur401	1	

LEVEL EIGHT

Translation Project	ENG 430	4	ENG 429
Teaching Practicum	ENG 461	12	ENG 260
The Holy Qur'an8	Qur451	1	

Jeddah University
Faculty of Languages and Translation: Course Plan for 2020

Module	*Code no.*	*Hours*	*Previous requirement*

FIRST YEAR

First Semester (12 hours in total)

English Language (1)	ELI 101	3	
Computing & IT Skills	CPIT100	2	
Concepts of Health & Fitness	EPHS100	2	
Introduction to Business	EPHS100	2	
Introduction to Education	EFEL101	3	

Second Semester (14 hours in total)

English Language (2)	ELI 102	3	ELI101
Statistics for Humanities	STAT111	3	
Academic Skills	ETEC100	2	
Individual & Community	ECUI100	3	
Principles of Administration	BUS101	3	

SECOND YEAR

Third Semester (14 hours in total)

Listening and speaking (1)	CLEL211	3	ELCA110
Reading 1	CLEL212	3	ELCA110
Writing 1	CLEL213	3	ELCA110
Vocabulary Building (1)	CLEL214	3	ISLS101
Islamic Culture (1)	ISLM101	3	
Arabic Language (1)	ARAB101	3	

Fourth Semester (18 hours in total)

Listening and speaking (2)	CLEL225	3	CLEL 211
Reading 2	CLEL226	3	CLEL212
Writing 2	CLEL227	3	CLEL 213
Vocabulary Building (2)	CLEL228	3	CLEL 214
Islamic Culture (2)	ISLM201	3	ISLM101
Arabic Language (2)	ARAB201	3	ARAB 101

THIRD YEAR

Fifth Semester (18 hours in total)

Introduction to English Linguistics	CLEL311	3	
Introduction to Translation	CLAT311	3	
Computer Applications in Translation	CLAT312	3	CPIT100
English–Arabic Contrastive Grammar	CLAT313	3	
Islamic Culture 3	ISLM301	3	ISLS 301
Nation Language (1) (French or Russian)	CLFL221 CLRL221	3	

Sixth Semester (17 hours in total)

Phonetics & Phonology	CLEL324	3	CLEL 311
Morphology & Syntax	CLEL325	3	CLEL 311
Semantics & Pragmatics	CLEL326	3	CLEL 311
Translation Theory	CLAT324	3	CLEL 311
Media Translation	CLAT325	3	CLEL 311
Nation Language (2) (French or Russian)	CLFL311 CLRL311	3	CLFL 221 CLRL 221

FOURTH YEAR

Seventh Semester (18 hours in total)

Simultaneous Interpretation	CLAT411	3	CLAT311
Legal & Commercial Translation	CLAT412	3	CLAT311
Language & Culture	CLAT413	3	
Terminology & Arabisation	CLAT414	3	
Research Methods in Translation	CLAT415	3	CLAT311
Practical Training in Translation 1		3	

Eighth Semester (12 hours in total)

Literary Translation	CLAT426	3	CLAT 311
World Literature	CLAT427	3	
Practicum in Translation	CLAT428	3	ALL SEVENTH SEMESTER
Free course (2)		3	

Saudi Electronic University
Department of English and Translation

Course Code & Number	Course Title	Credits

First Year Programme

Second Level (13 hours in total)

ENG 101	English	8
MATH 101	Introduction to Mathematics	3
AS 101	Academic Skills	2

Second Year Programme

Third Level (16 hours in total)

ISLM 101	Introduction to Islamic Culture I	2
ENG 201	Listening & Speaking I	3
ENG 210	Reading and Vocabulary Development	3
ENG 220	Academic Writing I	3
ENG 230	English Grammar I	3
ARB 240	Arabic Composition I	3

Fourth Level (17 hours in total)

ISLM 102	Introduction to Islamic Culture II	2
ENG 202	Listening & Speaking II	3
ENG 221	Advanced Reading Comprehension	3
ENG 231	English Grammar II	3
ENG 250	Academic Writing II	3
ARB 260	Applied Syntax and Morphology (Arabic)	3

Third Year Programme

Fifth Level (17 hours in total)

ISLM 104	Introduction to Islamic Culture IV	2
ENG 350	Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics	3
ENG 360	Discourse Analysis and Text-linguistics	3
ARB 211	Arabic Composition II	3

TRA 370	Legal & Business Translation	3
ENG 380	Stylistics	3

Sixth Level (17 hours in total)

ISLM 104	Introduction to Islamic Culture IV	2
ENG 350	Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics	3
ENG 360	Discourse Analysis and Text-linguistics	3
ARB 211	Arabic Composition II	3
TRA 370	Legal & Business Translation	3
ENG 380	Stylistics	3

Fourth Year Programme

Seventh Level (18 hours in total)

ENG 401	Introduction to Syntax and Morphology	3
TRA 410	Consecutive and Bilateral Interpreting	3
TRA 420	Principles and Practice of Computer Assisted Translation	3
TRA 430	Summary and Sight Translation	3
TRA 440	Technical and Scientific Translation	3
TRA450	Research Methodology	3

Eighth Level (15 hours in total)

TRA 460	Simultaneous Interpreting	3
TRA 470	Issues and Problem in Translation Studies	3
TRA 480	Media Translation	3
TRA 490	Conference Interpreting	3
TRA 499	Translation Project	3

King Abdulaziz University
Current Course Plan

Module	Number	Hours	Prerequisite/S

Foundation Year

Semester One (11 hours in total)

English language (1)	ELI 101	3	
University study skills	ETEC100	2	
Computing and IT skills	CPIT100	2	
Concepts of Health and Physical fitness	EPHS100	2	
Entrepreneurship skills	BUS100	2	

Total number of hours per week: 11

Semester Two (15 hours in total)

English language (2)	ELI 102	3	
Individual and community	ECUI 100	3	
Introduction to Education	FEEL 101	3	
Principles of Administration	BUS 101	3	
Introduction Statistics in Humanities	EPSE 101	3	

Second Year

Semester Three (18 hours in total)

Listening and Speaking English 1	AHLA 211	3	
Reading English (1)	AHLA 212	3	
Writing English (1)	AHLA 213	3	
Islamic Culture 1	ISLM 101	3	
Introduction to Natural Sciences	SCCH230	3	
Youth and Citizenship Values	AHSO210	3	

Semester Four (18 hours in total)

Listening and Speaking English 2	AHLA 221	3	AHLA 211
Reading English (2)	AHLA 222	3	AHLA 212
Writing English (2)	AHLA223	3	AHLA 213
Islamic Culture 2	ISLM 201	3	ISLM101
Philosophical thoughts in Islam	AHIS 210	3	
Arabic	ARAB 101	3	

Third Year

Semester Five (18 hours in total)

Introduction to Linguistics	AHLA311	3	AHLA 221
Introduction to Literature	AHLA 312	3	AHLA222
Introduction to Translation	AHLA 313	3	AHLA 223
French	AHLA 314	3	
Contemporary issues in Islamic Culture	ISLM 301	3	ISLM 201
Arabic Language 2	ARAB 201	3	ARAB 101

Semester Six (18 hours in total)

Fiction	AHLA 321	3	AHLA 312
Drama	AHLA 322	3	AHLA 312
Phonetics	AHLA 323	3	AHLA 311
Morphology	AHLA 324	3	AHLA 311
Grammar	AHLA 325	3	AHLA 311
Research Methods	AHLA 326	3	AHLA 311 AHLA 312

Fourth Year

Semester Seven (18 hours in total)

Free module 1	Free	3	
Applied Linguistics	AHLA 411	3	AHLA 311
Literary Criticism	AHLA 412	3	AHLA 312
Poetry	AHLA 413	3	AHLA 312
Phonology	AHLA 414	3	AHLA 323
Pragmatics	AHLA 415	3	AHLA 311

Semester Eight (18 hours in total)

Socio Linguistics	AHLA 421	3	AHLA 311
Seminar in Linguistics	AHLA 422	3	AHLA 311
Shakespeare	AHLA 423	3	AHLA 322
Modern Literature	AHLA 424	3	AHLA 312
(General) Practicum	AHLA 425	3	All seventh semester
Free module 2	Free	3	

Princess Nora University
College of Languages and Translation: Course Plan

No.	Module	Code/No	Credit Hrs.	Prerequisites

Year One

First Level (17 hours in total)

1	Listening and Speaking (1)	LING111T	3	-
2	Reading and Writing	LING 121T	3	-
3	Introduction to Literature	LITE 101T	3	-
4	Introduction to Translation	TRAN 111T	3	-
5	Introduction to French Language	FRNS 101T	3	-
6	Arabic Composition	ARAB 101M	3	-

Second Level (17 hours in total)

1	Dictionary Usage Skills	TRAN 131T	3	-
2	Advanced Listening and Speaking	LING 112T	3	LING 111T
3	Advanced Writing	LING 122T	3	LING121T
4	Grammar	LING 131T	3	-
5	Principles of Mathematics	MATH 100T	3	-
6	Islamic Culture (1)	ISLS 101M	2	-

Year Two

Third Level (18 hours in total)

1	Translation Technology	TRAN 241T	3	-
2	Specialized Translation En–Ar (1)	TRAN 212T	4	TRAN 111T

3	Professional Writing	LING 223T	3	LING 122T
4	Grammar in Use	LING 232T	3	LING 131T
5	Principles of Information and Technology Systems	IT 101T	2	-
6	Introduction to Semantics	ENGL 262D	3	
7	College Elective Course (1)		3	-

Fourth Level (17 hours in total)

1	Islamic Culture (2) (Woman and Family in the Quran and Sunna)	ISLS 202M	2	ISLS 101M
2	Language Skills	ARAB 202 M	2	
3	Introduction to Interpreting	TRAN 221T	3	-
4	Specialized Translation Ar–En (1)	TRAN 213T	4	TRAN 111T
5	Morphology and Syntax	LING 233T	3	LING 232T
6	College Elective Course (2)	-	3	-

Year Three

Fifth Level (18 hours in total)

1	Islamic Culture (3) (Woman and Life: Fields and Regulations)	ISLS 303 M	2	ISLS 101M
2	Text Analysis for Translation Purposes	TRAN 314T	3	TRAN 111T
3	Specialized Translation From En- Ar (2)	TRAN 315T	4	TRAN 212T
4	Sight and Bilateral Interpreting	TRAN 322T	4	TRAN 221T
5	Semantics and Pragmatics	LING 342T	3	LING 233T
6	Free Elective Course (1)	-	2	-

Sixth Level (18 hours in total)

1	Islamic Culture (4) (Women and Contemporary Issues)	ISLS 404M	2	ISLS 101M
2	Consecutive Interpreting	TRAN 323T	4	TRAN 221T
3	Specialized Translation Ar–En (2)	TRAN 316T	4	TRAN 213T
4	College Elective course (3)	-	3	-
5	Business Communication Skills	BUS 241T	3	-
6	Proofreading in Arabic	ARAB 475T	2	

Year Four

Seventh Level (17 hours in total)

1	College Elective Course (4)	-	3	-
2	Specialized Translation Ar–En (3)	TRAN 417T	4	TRAN 316T
3	Simultaneous Interpreting	TRAN 424T	4	TRAN 323T
4	Terminology and Arabisation	TRAN 432T	3	-
5	Audiovisual Translation	TRAN 442T	3	-

Eighth Level (16 hours in total)

No.	Requisite	Code/No	Contact Hours			Credit Hrs.	Prerequisites
			Theoretical	Practical	Training		
1	Professional Translation Skills	TRAN 433T	3		-	3	-
2	Free Elective Course (2		3			3	
3	Free Elective Course (3		4			4	
4	Graduation Project	TRAN 451T	4	-		4	TRAN 131T LING 112T LING 223T LING 342T TRAN 241T TRAN 314T TRAN 315T TRAN 322T TRAN 424T TRAN 417T TRAN 432T TRAN 442T
5	Field Training	TRAN 452T		15		3	

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Module	Number	Hours	Prerequisite/S

FOUNDATION YEAR

Semester One (15 hours/week total)

Math Basics	MATH 130	2	
Computer Skills	TECH 140	3	
Communication Skills	SCIE 140	2	
English Language	ENG 140	8	

Semester Two (16 hours/week total)

Introduction to Statistics	STAT 140	2	
Writing Skills In Arabic	ARAB 140	2	
Learning, Thinking, and Research Skills	NHJ 140	3	
Health and Fitness 1	HLTH 150	1	
English Language 2	ENG 150	8	ENG 140

Semester Three (18 hours/week total)

Reading English 1	LANE 111	3	
Writing English 1	LANE 112	3	
English Grammar 1	LANE 113	3	
Listening and Speaking English 1	LANE 114	3	
Dictionary Skills	LANE 115	2	
Comparative Constructions 1	LANE116	2	
Vocabulary Building English	LANE119	2	

Semester Four (18 hours/week total)

Reading Skills in Arabic	ARAB118	2	
Reading English 2	LANE 121	3	LANE 111
Writing English 2	LANE 12	3	LANE 112
English Grammar 2	LANE 123	3	LANE 113
Speaking and Listening English 2	LANE 124	3	LANE 114
Comparative Constructions 2	LANE 125	2	LANE 116
Reading in the Target Language Culture 1	LANE 126	2	LANE 111

YEAR TWO

Semester Five (17 hours/week total)

Writing Skills in Arabic	ARAB119	2	ARAB 118
Reading English 3	LANE 231	3	LANE 121
Readings in the Target Language Culture 2	LANE 232	2	LANE 12
English Grammar 3	LANE 233	2	LANE 123
Listening and Speaking English 3	LANE 234	2	LANE 124

Essays and Summary Writing	LANE 235	3	LANE 122
Introduction to Linguistics	LANE 236	3	LANE121,122,123, 124

Semester Six (14 hours/week total)

Arabic Grammar 1	ARAB234	3	119 ARAB
Translating Humanities Texts	TRNE241	2	LANE232
Introduction to English Syntax and Morphology	LINE243	2	LINE236
Scientific Research Methodology	LINE244	2	
Introduction to Translation Studies	TRNE 245	2	LANE 116, 125
Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics	LINE 246	3	LANE 236

Year Three

Semester Seven (14 hours/week total)

Module	Number	Hours	Prerequisite/S
French Language Skills	FREN 101	3	
Specialised Writing	ARAB 255	2	ARAB 234
Discourse Analysis	LINE 351	3	236 LINE, 246 LINE, and 243 LINE
At-Sight Translation	TRAE 353	2	TRNE 245
Texts Linguistics	LINE 353	2	LINE 236
Translation of Economics and Administrative Texts	TRAE 354	2	TRNE 245

Semester Eight (16 hours/week total)

French Language Skills 2	FREN102	3	FREN 101
Applying Stylistics in Arabic	ARAB 350	3	ARAB 255
Computer Applications to Translation	TRNE 361	2	TRNE 245
Translation of Military and Security Texts	TRAE 366	2	TRNE 245
Medical Translation	TRNE 367	2	TRNE 245
Translation of Islamic Texts	TRNE 368	2	TRNE 245
Consecutive and Bilateral Interpreting 1	TRNE 369	2	TRNE 353

YEAR FOUR

Semester Nine (18 hours/week total)

French Language Skills 3	FREN 103	3	FREN 102
Translation of Legal Texts	TRNE 471	2	TRNE 245
Consecutive and Bilateral Interpreting 2	TRAE 472	2	TRNE 369
Arabisation	TRAE 473	2	TRNE 245
Translation of Engineering and Petroleum Texts	TRAE 474	2	TRNE 245
Contrastive Linguistics	LINE 474	2	LINE 351
Simultaneous Interpreting 1	TRAE 475	2	TRNE 369
Issues and Problems in Translation	TRNE 476	3	TRNE 245

Semester Ten (13 hours/week total)

French Language Skills 4	FREN 104	3	FREN 103
Simultaneous Interpreting 2	TRAE 486	2	TRNE 375
Translation of Literary Texts	TRNE 487	2	TRNE 245
Translation of Science and Technology Texts	TRNE 488	2	TRNE 245
Translation Project	489 TRNE	4	TRNE 476

Appendix 12: Proposed curriculum for Saudi Universities

FIRST YEAR:
First Semester:

module	hours
English Language (1)	3
Introduction to Computing & IT Skills	2
Introduction to translation 1	2
Introduction to Business	2
Introduction to Education	2

Total number of hours 12

Second semester:

English Language (2)	3
Statistics for Humanities	3
Academic Skills	2
Principles of Information and Technology systems	3

Introduction to translation 2	3

Total number of hours 14

SECOND YEAR:

Third semester:

module	hours
Legal and Business Translation.	3
Principles and practice of CAT	3
Translation and Theory	3
Translation Issues Across Media	3
Principles of Administration	3
Intercultural Communication Across Borders	3

18 hours

fourth semester:

Introduction to English Linguistics	3
Translation and adaptation	3
Introduction to Interpreting	3
Advanced translation	3
Optional Arabic/French/ Chinese.	3

Work-shadowing	3

18 hours

Third Year:

Fifth semester:

Forensic Linguistics and Translation	3
Specialized translation	3
Computer Applications in Translation	3
English - Arabic Contrastive Grammar	3
Conference Interpreting	3
Technical and Scientific Translation	3

17 HOURS

Sixth semester:

Issues and Problems in Translation Studies	3
Text analysis for Translation purposes	3
Audiovisual Translation	3
Translation Theory and Practice	3

Media Translation	3

Work shadowing	3

18 HOURS

FOURTH YEAR:

Seventh semester:

Technological tool for Subtitling and Dubbing	3
Legal & Commercial Translation	3
Language & Culture	3
Terminology & Arabization	3
Research Methods in Translation	3
Professional Translation skills	3

18 HOURS

Eighth semester:

Practicum in Translation	12

12 HOURS